The SATURDAY EVENING POST.

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A CANDID MOMENT.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST
BY MISS SARAH T. SMITH.

Sad, do you say? Dear friend, you read aright!
But you will let me give my mood its way?
I need not wear, before your loving sight—
A mask, but bear my cross in open day.

Well, I thank God I've lived my life thus far!
My birthday dawns to-morrow. Do you know
How oft the years have dimmed my guiding star,
And left me hopeless on a sea of woe?

I'm twenty-four! When you and I last met
The Summers of my life were seventeen,
I count the *winters* now with sad regret
That all my Summers were a passing sheen.

Nay, do not smile! The wearing of a life
Is not by days nor months. If *that* were true,
Who would grow old? It is the endless strife—
Our *cares* are many but our *years* are few!

I don't complain. God knoweth what is best,
The discipline we need is what is sent.
We yearn for holiness. He hears the rest,
Come as it may, there is a blessing meant.

And after all, it cannot be for long!
The end *must* come—'tis nearer by a year—
Just as we cease the refrain of a song,
A day will come and will not find us here.

No more than that. The sun will shine until
The shadows fall and deepen into night,
And none will heed or miss us—care less still
That we have found "the world which sets this right."

Dear friend, you've heard me make my little mean,
One cannot always keep the heart in chains,
Sometimes it is so hard to be alone,
I'm fain to make a story of my pains.

And ask the world to give for pity's sake
A little loving kindness "to my woe,"
But reason, bless her!—gives a little shake
To her wise head, and so, I let it go.

And live my life as other women do,—
So! you are dressed! Then let us go and dine.
Your dress is beautiful! I like that blue.
With roses in your hair, you'd look divine.

STRONGHAND;

A ROMANCE OF THE PRAIRIES.

BY GUSTAVE AIMARD,

AUTHOR OF "PRAIRIE FLOWER," "QUEEN OF THE SAVANNAH," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE SPY.

After installing the majordomo in the calli, Stronghand proceeded through the village, taking an apparently careless glance around, but in reality not letting anything unusual escape his notice. The Indians whom the hunter met addressed him as an old acquaintance; the very women and children tried to attract his attention by their hearty bursts of laughter and their greetings of welcome. For all and for each the hunter had a pleasant remark, and thus satisfied the frequently indiscreet claims of those who pressed around him. Thus occupied, he went right through the village, and, on reaching the foot of the left-hand pyramid, dismounted, threw his horse's bridle to a boy, bidding him lead the horse to his calli, and forced his way with some difficulty through the crowd, whose curiosity seemed to increase instead of diminishing. He walked up to the ladder, and after waving his hand to the Indians, hurried up it, and disappeared inside the pyramid.

This strange building, which was almost shapeless outside, was internally arranged with the utmost care and most perfect intelligence. The hunter, who was doubtless anxious to reach his destination, only took a hurried glance at the rooms he passed through; he went up an internal staircase, and soon reached the top of the pyramid. Sparrow Hawk was standing motionless before a cougar's skin hung up in lieu of a door, and on seeing the hunter he bowed courteously.

"My father has not delayed," he said, with a good-tempered smile.

"Has the council begun yet?" Stronghand asked.

"For four suns the elders of the nation have remained without taking rest round the council fire; the arrival of my father was alone able to make them suspend their labors for an hour."

The hunter frowned.

"Cannot I speak to the great sachem for a moment?"

"I cannot give my father any information on that point."

"Good!" the hunter continued, apparently forming a determination. "Has Sparrow Hawk no instructions for me?"

"None, but to await Stronghand, and announce his arrival."

"Wah! here I am; my brother's instructions are fulfilled."

THE COUNCIL OF THE SACHEMS.

Without replying, Sparrow Hawk raised the curtain, and allowed the hunter to pass into the council-hall.

In a large room, which was entirely destitute of furniture—unless that name can be given to dried buffalo skins employed as seats—some twenty persons were gravely seated in a circle, smoking a calumet silently, whose mouthpiece constantly passed from hand to hand. In the centre of the circle was a golden brasier, in which burned the sacred fire of Montezuma, a fire which must never go out. According to tradition, the last Emperor of Mexico shared it among his dearest partisans on the eve of his death; and this fire, it is also said, derives its origin from the sun itself.

The presence of this fire in the room, which was generally kept in a subterraneous vault, inaccessible to the sight of the common herd, and which is only shown to the people on grand occasions, proved the gravity of the matters the council had to discuss. Moreover, the appearance of the chiefs assembled in the room had about it something stern and imposing that inspired respect. Contrary to Indian habits, they were all unarmed. This precaution, which was owing to the advice of the principal sachem of the nation, was justified not only by the considerable number of chiefs present, but also by their belonging to various nations. Each tribe of the grand confederation of the Pajazos had its representative in this assembly, where were also the sachems of nations ordinarily at war with it, but who, in the hope of a general revolt against the whites, the implacable enemies of the red race, had forgotten their hatred for a season. Here could be seen Yaquis, Mayos, Seris, and even free hunters and trappers, white and half-breed, in their grand war paint, with their heels adorned with wolves' tails, an honorary distinction to which only the great braves have a right.

Thunderbolt, the old man whose portrait we have just drawn, presided over the assembly. On the entrance of Stronghand, all the warriors rose, turned to him, and after bowing gracefully, invited him to take a seat among them. The hunter, flattered in his heart by the honor done him, bowed gravely to the members of the council, and seated himself on the right of Thunderbolt, after handing his weapons to Sparrow Hawk, who carried them into an adjoining room. There was a rather long silence, during which the hunter smoked the calumet which had been eagerly offered him. At length Thunderbolt began speaking.

"My son could not arrive at a better moment," he said, addressing Stronghand; "his return was eagerly desired by his brothers. He has come from the country inhabited by our enemies; without doubt he will give us news."

The hunter rose, looked round the meeting, and replied—"I have been among the Gachupinos, I have entered their towns, I have seen their pueblos, presidios, and posts; like ourselves, they are preparing for war; they understand the extent of the danger that threatens them, and are trying to neutralize it by all means."

"The news is not very explicit; we hoped that Stronghand would give us more serious information about the movements of the enemy," Thunderbolt remarked, with a reproachful accent.

"Perhaps I could do so," the hunter remarked, calmly.

"Then why are you silent?"

The young man hesitated for a moment beneath the glances fixed on him.

"The white men have a proverb," he said, at length, "whose justice I specially recognize at this moment."

"What is it?"

"Words are silver, but silence is gold."

"Which means?" Thunderbolt continued, eagerly.

"The most formidable weapon of the white man is treachery," the hunter continued, not appearing to heed the interruption; "they have even conquered by treachery the red-skins, whom they did not dare meet face to face. Questions so interesting as those we have to settle, such serious interests as we have to discuss, must not be treated in so large an assembly ere it is quite certain that a traitor has not glided in among us."

"We cannot act otherwise than we are doing."

"Yes, and that is why the whites are cleverer than we: so soon as war is declared, they appoint a commission, composed of three members, or five at the most, who have to draw up the plan of the campaign. Why do we not do the same? Nothing is more simple, it seems to me: choose, among the chiefs assembled here, a certain number of wise men accustomed to command; these men will assemble in secret, and decide on the means to be employed in conquering our enemy: in this way, if the Spaniards are informed of our movements, the traitor cannot escape us for long. I have spoken: my brothers will determine whether my words deserve being taken into consideration."

After bowing to the audience, the hunter sat down again, and seemed to be plunged into deep thought. One of the instinctive qualities of the Indian race is good sense. The chiefs, in spite of the circumlocution in which the hunter had thought it necessary to envelop his remarks, had perfectly understood him: they had caught the justice of his reasoning, and the advantage of a speedy decision on a subject so interesting to the entire confederation: they guessed, under the hunter's reticence, a name which, for secret reasons of his own, he did not wish to utter, and hence his speech was greeted with a buzz of satisfaction, which is always flattering to the ears of an orator, no matter what be the nature of his hearers. Thunderbolt questioned the members of the council by a glance; all replied with an affirmative shake of their heads.

"Your plan is adopted," the chief said; "we recognise the necessity of carrying it out. But this time again we must apply to you to choose the members of the council whom we have to elect."

"Chance alone must decide the solution. All the sachems collected in this hall are great braves of their tribes, and the picked warriors of their nations. No matter on whom the lot falls, the members will behave honorably in the new council."

"Stronghand has spoken well, as he always does, when he is called upon to give his opinion in the council of the chiefs; now let him finish what he has so well begun, by instructing us of the way in which we are to consult chance."

"Be it so: I will obey my father."

The hunter rose and left the hall, but his absence lasted only a few minutes. During this interval the chiefs remained motionless and silent. Stronghand soon returned, followed by Sparrow Hawk, who, as he had been ordered by the sachems to keep the door, had not taken part in the deliberations, though he had a right to do so. This chief carried a blanket tied up so as to form a bag.

"In this blanket," the hunter then said, "I have placed a number of bullets equal to that of the chiefs assembled in council; I have taken these bullets from the ammunition-bag of every one of the chiefs. I have noticed that our guns are of different bores, and hence some of the bullets are larger, others smaller. Each of us will draw a bullet haphazard; when all have one, they will be examined; and the three chiefs, if you fix on that number, or the five, if you prefer that number, to whom chance has given the largest bullets, will compose the new counsel."

"That is a simple way, and will prevent any annoyance," Thunderbolt said; "I believe that we shall do well by adopting it."

The chiefs bowed their assent.

"But," the sachem continued, "before we begin drawing, let us first settle of how many members the council shall consist; shall there be three or five?"

A white trapper rose and asked leave to speak. It was a man of about forty years of age, with frank and energetic features and muscular limbs, well known all over the western prairies by the singular name of Whistler.

"If I may be allowed," he said, "to offer my opinion on such a matter before wise men and renowned warriors—for I am only a poor rogue of a hunter—I would call your attention to the fact that, with a committee whose duties are so serious, three men are not sufficient to discuss a question advantageously, because it is so easy to obtain a majority. On the other hand, five men mutually enlighten each other, by exchanging their ideas and starting objections: hence, I am of opinion that the council ought to be composed of five members. I will add one word: Will the white and half-breed hunters and trappers here present take part in the election?"

"Do they not fight with us?" Thunderbolt asked.

"This is true," Whistler continued; "still it would be, perhaps, better for you to settle the matter among yourselves; we are, in reality, only your allies."

"You are our brothers and friends; in the name of the chiefs of the confederation, I thank you, Whistler, for the delicate proposal you have made; but we do not accept your offer, for all must be in common between you and us."

"You will do as you please. I spoke for your good; and if it does not suit you, say no more about it."

While these remarks were exchanged between the trapper and Thunderbolt, the chiefs had decided that the military commission should be composed of five members. The drawing at once began; each warrior went, in his turn, to draw a bullet from the bag held by Sparrow Hawk; then the verification was begun with that good faith and impartiality which the Indians display in all their actions when dealing with one another. On this occasion chance was intelligent, as happens more frequently than is supposed, when it is left free to act: the chiefs chosen to form the committee were exactly those who, if another mode of election had been employed, would have gained all the votes through their talent, experience, and wisdom. Hence, the sachems frankly applauded the decision of fate, and in their superstition, derived from this caprice of accident a favorable augury for the result of the war. The committee was composed as follows:—Thunderbolt, Sparrow Hawk, Stronghand, Whistler, and a renowned Apache chief, whose name was the Peccary.

When the election was over, just as the chiefs were returning to their seats, Stronghand approached a trapper, who, ever since his entrance, had seemed to shun his eye, and conceal himself, as far as possible, behind the other chiefs. Tapping him on the shoulder, he said, in a low but imperative voice—

"Master Kidd—two words, if you please."

The adventurer—for it was really he—started at the touch, but immediately recovering himself, he turned his smiling face to the hunter's, and said, with a respectful bow—

"I am quite at your service, caballero; can I be so happy as to be able to help you in anything?"

"Yes," the hunter answered, dryly.

"Speak, caballero, speak; and as far as lies in my power—"

"A truce to these hypocritical protestations," Stronghand rudely interrupted him, "and let us come to facts."

"I am listening to you," the other said, trying to hide his anxiety.

"This is the point—rightly or wrongly, your presence here offends me."

"What can I do to prevent that, my dear Senor?"

"A very simple thing."

"What is it, if you please?"

"Leave the tower at once, mount your horse, and be off."

"Oh!" the bandit said, with a forced laugh, "allow me to remark, my dear senor, that the idea seems to me a singular one."

"Do you think so?" the hunter remarked, coldly; "well, opinions differ. For my part, I consider it quite natural."

"Of course you are jesting."

"Do you fancy me capable of jesting—before all, with a man like you? I think not. Well, I repeat, be off; be off as quickly as possible. I advise you for your own good."

"I must have an excuse for such a flight. What will the Indian chiefs who did me the honor of summoning me to their grand council, and my friends the hunters suppose, on seeing me thus abandon them without any apparent motive, at the very moment when the war is about to begin?"

"That does not concern me; I want you to be off at once; if not—"

"Well?"

"I shall blow out your brains, in the presence of all, as a traitor and a spy. You understand me now, my master, I think?"

The bandit started violently; his face became livid, and for some minutes he fixed his viper eye on the hunter, who examined him ironically; then bending down to his ear, he said, in a voice choked with rage and shame—

"Stronghand, you are the stronger, and any resistance on my part would be mad; I shall go, therefore; but remember this—I shall be avenged."

Stronghand shrugged his shoulders contemptuously.

"Do so," he said, "if you can; but, in the meanwhile, be off if you do not wish me to carry out my threat!" and he turned his back on the bandit. Kidd gave him a parting look of fury, and without adding a word, left the hall. Ten minutes later he was galloping on the road to the Real de Minas, revolving the most sinister schemes.

Although the chiefs had guessed from Stronghand's gestures what was going on between him and the bandit, not one of them made the slightest allusion to Kidd's departure, or even seemed to notice it. The Canadian trapper, named Whistler, alone went up to the hunter, and pressing his hand, said, with a coarse laugh—

"By heavens! comrade, you did not miss your game, but brought it down at the first shot. Receive my sincere congratulations for having freed us of that skunk, who is neither fish nor flesh, and whose roguish face did not at all please me."

"It would please you much less, my good fellow, if you knew him," the hunter replied, with a smile.

"I beg you to believe that I have no desire to form a closer acquaintance with that picaro; only too many like him may be met on the prairies."

The chiefs had resumed their seats, and the council, which had been momentarily interrupted, was reopened by Stronghand, who, after speaking for some time, concluded: "I believe that the moment now has arrived to strike the grand blow for which we have so long been preparing. Our enemies hesitate; they are demoralized; their soldiers tremble; and I am convinced they will not withstand the attack of our and the great Beaver's warriors. This is what I wished to say to the council. Still it was not advisable that such important news should reach the ears of our enemies. The sachems will judge whether I have acted well, or if my zeal carried me too far in dismissing from the council a pale-face who, I am convinced, is a traitor sold to the Mexicans. I have spoken."

A flattering murmur greeted the concluding remarks of the young man, who sat down, blushing.

"It appears to me," Whistler then said, "that the debate need not be a long one. As war is decided on, the council of the Confederation has only to seek allies among the other Indian nations, in order to augment the number of our warriors, if that be pos-

sible. As regards the operations, and the period when the Mexican territory is to be invaded, that will devolve on the military committee, who pledge themselves to the profoundest secrecy about their discussions, until the hour for action arrives. I have spoken."

Thunderbolt rose.

"Chiefs and sachems of the Confederation of the Papazos," he said, in his sympathetic and sonorous voice, "and you, warriors, our allies, the moment for dissolving your council has at length arrived. Henceforth the committee of the five chiefs will alone sit. Each of you will return to his tribe, arm his warriors, and order the scalp-dance to be performed round the war post; but the eighth sun must see you here again at the head of your warriors, in order that all may be ready to act when the invasion is decided on. I have spoken. Have I said well, powerful men?"

The chiefs rose in silence, resumed their weapons, and immediately left the village, starting in different directions at a gallop. Thunderbolt and Stronghand were left alone.

"My son," the old man then said, "have you nothing to tell me?"

"Yes, father," the young man respectfully answered, "I have very serious news for you."

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE RANCHO.

Before describing the conversation between Thunderbolt and Stronghand, we are obliged to go back, and tell the reader certain facts which had occurred at the Hacienda del Toro, a few days before the major-domo set out for Hermosillo. Mexican girls, born and bred on the Indian border, enjoy a liberty which the want of society renders indispensable. Always on horseback upon these immense estates, which extend for twenty or five-and-twenty leagues, their life is spent in riding over hill and dale, visiting the wretched huts of the vaqueros and peons, relieving their wants, and rendering themselves beloved by their simple graces and affecting goodness of heart.

Dona Marianna, who had been exiled for several years at a convent, so soon as she returned home, eagerly renewed her long rides through forests and prairies, to see again the persons in her father's employ, with whom she had sported as a child, and of whom she had such a pleasant recollection. At times followed by a servant, specially attached to her, but more usually alone, the maiden had therefore recommenced her rides, going to visit one and the other, enjoying her gallop, careless as a bird, pleased with everything—the flowers she culled as she passed, the reviving breeze she inhaled, and smiling gayly at the sun which bronzed her complexion.

Most usually Dona Marianna guided her horse to a rancho situated about three leagues from the hacienda, in the midst of a majestic forest of evergreen oaks and larches. This rancho, which was built of adobes, and whitewashed, stood on the bank of a stream, in the centre of a field sufficiently cleared to grow the grain required for the support of the poor inhabitants of the hovel. In the rear of the rancho was an enclosure, serving as a corral, and containing two cows and four or five horses, the sole fortune of the master of this rancho, which, however, internally was not so poverty-stricken as the exterior seemed to forebode. It was divided into three parts, two of which served as bedrooms, and the third as sitting-room, saloon, kitchen, &c. In the latter, the fowls impunently came to pick up grain and pieces of tortillas which had been allowed to fall.

On the right was a sort of low fire-place, evidently for culinary purposes; the middle of the room was occupied by a large oak table with twisted legs; at the end, two doors opened into the bed-rooms, and the walls were covered with those hideous colored plates which Parisian trade inundates the New World with, and under which intelligent hawkers print the names of saints, to render the sale more easy. Among these engravings was one representing Napoleon crossing the St. Bernard, accompanied by a guide, holding his horse. It bore the rather too fanciful title, "The great St. Martin dividing his cloak with a beggar." A fact which imparts incomparable meaning to this humorous motto is, that the general, far from wishing to give his cloak to the guide, who does not want it, seems to be shivering with cold, and wrapping himself up with extreme care.

This rancho had been for many years inhabited by the same family, who were the last relics of the Indians dwelling here when the country was discovered by the Spaniards. These Indians, who were mansos, and long converted to Christianity, had been old and faithful servants of the Marquises de Mogner, who were always attached to them, and made it a point of honor to heighten their comforts, and give them their protection under all circumstances. Hence the devotion of these worthy people to the Mogner family was affecting, through its simple self-denial. They had forgotten their Indian name, and were only known by that of Sanchez.

At the moment when we introduce this family to the reader, it consisted of three persons: the father, a blind old man, but upright and hale, who, in spite of his infirmity, still traversed all the forest tracks without hesitation or risk of losing himself, merely accompanied by his dog Bouchaley; the mother, a woman about forty years of age, tall, robust, and possessing marked features, which, when she was younger, must have been very handsome; and the son, a young man of about twenty, well built, and a daring hunter, who held the post of tigrero at the hacienda.

Luisa Sanchez had been nurse to Dona Marianna, and the young lady, deprived at an early age of her mistress, had retained for her not merely that friendship which children generally have for their nurse, but that craving for affection, so natural in young hearts, and which Dona Marianna, restrained by her father's apparent sternness, could not indulge. The maiden's return to the hacienda caused great joy at the rancho; father, mother and son at once mounted and proceeded to the Toro to embrace their child, as they simply called her. Half-way they met Dona Marianna, who, in her impatience to see them again, was galloping like a mad girl, followed by her brother.

Since then, not a day passed on which the young lady did not carry the sunshine of her presence to the rancho, and shared the breakfast of the family—a frugal meal, composed of light cakes, roasted on an iron plate, boiled beef seasoned with chile colorado, milk, and *quesadillas*, or cheese-cakes, hard and green and leathery, which the young lady, however, declared to be excellent, and heartily enjoyed. Bouchaley, like everybody else at the rancho, entertained a feeling of adoration for Dona Marianna. He was a long-haired black and white mastiff, about ten years old, and spiteful and noisy as all his congeners. In reality, the dog possessed but one good quality—its well-tried fidelity to its master, whom it never took its eyes off, and constantly crouched at his feet. Since the young lady's return, the heart of the worthy quadruped had opened to a new affection; each morning it took its post on the road by which Dona Marianna came, and as soon as it saw her, saluted her by leaps and deafening barks.

Marianno Sanchez, the tigrero, had for his foster-sister an affection heightened by the similarity of name—a similarity which in Spanish America gives a right to a sort of spiritual relationship. Hence the tigrero, in order to be present each morning at his friend's breakfast, often rode eight or ten leagues in the morning, and found his reward in a smile from the young lady. As for Father Sanchez, since the return of his child, as he called her, he only felt one regret. It was that he could not see her and and admire her beauty; but he consoled himself by embracing her.

It was about eleven o'clock in the morning; the sun illumined the hut; the birds were singing merrily in the forest. Father Sanchez had taken up the handmill, and was grinding the wheat, while his wife, after sifting the wheat, pounded it, and formed it into light cakes, called tortillas, which, after being griddled, would form the solid portion of the breakfast. Bouchaley was at his post on the road, watching for the arrival of the young lady.

"How is it," the old man asked, "that Marianno is not here yet? I generally hear the sound of his horse earlier than this."

"Poor lad! who knows where he is at this moment?" the mother answered. "He has for some days been watching a band of jaguars that have bitten several horses at the hacienda. He is certainly ambushed in some thicket. I only trust he will not be devoured some day by the terrible animals."

"Nonsense, wife," the old man continued, with a shrug of the shoulders. "Maternal love renders you foolish. Marianno devoured by the tigers!"

"Well, I see nothing impossible in that."

"You might just as well say that Bouchaley is capable of chasing a peccari; one thing is as possible as the other. Besides, you forget that our son never goes out without his dog Bigote, a cross between a wolf and a Newfoundland dog, as big as a six months' old colt, and who is capable of breaking the loins of a coyote at one snap.

"I do not say no, father; I do not say no," she continued, with a shake of her head; "that does not prevent his being a dangerous trade, which may one day or another cost him his life."

"Stuff! Marianno is too clever a hunter for that; besides the trade is lucrative; each jaguar-skin brings him in fourteen piastres—a sum we cannot afford to despise, since my infirmity has prevented me from working. It would be better for my old carcase to return to the earth, as I am no longer good for anything."

"Do not speak so, father; especially before our daughter, for she would not forgive you: for what you are saying is unjust; you have worked enough in your time to rest now, and your son take your place."

"Well, tell me, wife," the old man said, laughingly, "was I devoured by the jaguar? And yet I was a tigrero for more than forty years, and the jaguars were not nearly so polite in my time as they are now."

"That is all very well; it is true that you have not been devoured, but your father and your grandfather were. What answer have you to that?"

"Hem!" the old man went on, in some embarrassment; "I will answer—I will answer—"

"Nothing, and that will be the best," she continued; "for you could not say anything satisfactory."

"Nonsense! what do you take me for, mother? If my father and grandfather were devoured, and that is true, it was—"

"Well, what? I am anxious to hear."

"Because they were treacherously attacked by the jaguars," he at length said, with a triumphant air; "the wretches knew whom they had to deal with, and so played cunning. Otherwise they would never have got the best of two such clever hunters as my father and grandfather."

The ranchera shrugged her shoulders with a smile, but she considered it unnecessary to answer, as she was well aware she would not succeed in making her husband change his opinion as to her son's dangerous trade. The old man, satisfied with having reduced his wife to silence, as he fancied, did not abuse his victory; with a crafty smile he rolled and lit a cigarette, while Mother Luisa laid the table, arranged and dusted everything in the rancho, and listened anxiously to assure herself that the footfall of her son's horse was not mingled with the sounds that incessantly rose from the forest.

All at once Bouchaley was heard barking furiously. The old man drew himself up in his chair, while Na Sanchez rushed to the doorway, in which Dona Marianna appeared, fresh and smiling.

"Good-morning, father! good-morning, mother!" she exclaimed in her silvery voice, and kissed the forehead of the old man, who tenderly pressed her to his heart. "Come, Bouchaley, come, be quiet!" she added, patting the dog, which still gambolled round her. "Mother, ask Marianno to put Negro in the corral, for the good animal has earned its alfalfa."

"I will go, Querida," the old man said; "for to-day I take Marianno's place." And he left the rancho without awaiting an answer.

"Mother," the young lady continued, with a shade of anxiety, "where is my foster-brother? I do not see him."

"He has not yet arrived, nina."

"What! not arrived?"

"Oh, I trust he will soon be here," she said, while stifling a sigh.

The maiden looked at her for a moment sympathetically.

"What is the matter, mother?" she at length said, as she seized the poor woman's hand; "can any accident have happened?"

"The Lord guard us from it, Querida," Luisa said, clasping her hands.

"Still, you are anxious, mother. You are hiding something from me. Tell me at once what it is."

"Nothing, my child; forgive me. Nothing extraordinary has occurred, and I am hiding nothing from you; but—"

"But what?" Dona Marianna interrupted her.

"Well, since you insist, Querida, I confess to you I am alarmed. You know that Marianno is tigrero to the hacienda."

"Yes; what then?"

"I am always frightened lest he should meet with an accident, for that happens so easily."

"Come, come, mother; do not have such thoughts as these. Marianno is an intrepid hunter, and possesses far from common skill and tact."

"Ah, bija, you are of the same opinion as my old man. Alas! if I lost my son, what would become of me?"

"Oh, mother, why talk in that way? Marianno, I hope, runs no danger. The delay that alarms you means nothing; you will soon see him again."

"May you be saying the truth, dear child!"

"I am so convinced of it, mamita, that I will not sit down to table till he arrives."

"Well, you will not have to wait long," the old man said, as he re-entered the rancho.

"Is he coming?" the mother joyously exclaimed, as she furtively wiped away a tear.

"I knew it," the maiden remarked.

"There, do you hear his horse?" the old man said.

In fact, the furious gallop of a horse echoed in the forest, and approached with the rapidity of a hurricane. The two women darted to the door. At this moment a horseman appeared on the skirt of the clearing, riding at full speed, with his hair floating in the breeze, and his face animated by the speed at which he rode. This horseman, who was powerfully and yet gracefully built, and had a manly, energetic face, was Marianno, the tigrero. His dog, a black and white Newfoundland, with powerful chest and enormous head, was running by the side of the horse, and looking up intelligently every moment.

"Viva Dios!" the young man exclaimed, as he leaped from his horse. "I am glad to see you, for I was afraid that I should arrive too late. Bigote," he added, addressing his dog and throwing the bridle to it, which the animal seized with its mouth, "lead Moreno to the corral."

The dog immediately proceeded thither, followed by the horse, while Marianno and the two women returned to the rancho. The young man kissed his father's forehead and took his hand, saying, "Good-morning, papa!" and then returned to his mother, whom he embraced several times.

"Cruel child," she said to him, "why did you delay so long?"

"Pay no attention to what your mother says, muchacho," the old man remarked; "she is foolish."

"Fie! you must not say that!" the young lady exclaimed; "you would do better in scolding Marianno, for I, too, felt alarmed."

"Do not be angry with me," the young man replied; "I have been for some days on the track of a family of jaguars, which is prowling about the neighborhood, and I could not possibly come sooner."

"Are they about here?"

"No; they are prowlers brought here by the drought; and are the more dangerous because, as they do not belong to these parts, they rest where they please—sometimes at one place, sometimes at another, and it becomes very difficult to follow their trail."

"I only hope they will not think of coming here," the mother said, anxiously.

"I do not believe they will, for wild beasts shun the vicinity of man. Still, Dona Marianna had better, for some days to come, restrict her rides, and not venture too far into the forest."

"What can I have to fear?"

"Nothing, I hope; still it is better to act prudently. Wild beasts are animals whose habits it is very difficult to discover, especially when they are in unknown parts, as these are."

"Nonsense!" the young lady said, with a laugh; "you are trying to frighten me, Marianno."

"Do not believe that; I will accompany you with Bigote to the hacienda."

The dog, which had returned to its master's side after performing its duties, wagged its tail, and looked up in her face.

"I will not allow that," the young lady replied, as she passed her hand through the dog's silky coat, and pulled its ears; "let Bigote have a rest. I came alone, and will return alone; and mounted on Negro, I defy the tigers to catch me up, unless they are ambuscaded on my road."

"Still, nina—" Marianno objected.

"Not a word more on the subject, I beg; let us breakfast, for I am literally dying of hunger; and were the tigers here," she added, with a laugh, "they might frighten me, but not deprive me of my appetite."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

☞ In Rhode Island a young lady, at a masquerade, wore the skins of 97 geese—or 98, including her own.

☞ Three or four months ago an Italian fisherman climbed Vesuvius and threw himself into the burning crater. Since then five or six Neapolitans have committed suicide in the same way, and the plan threatens to become fashionable.

☞ When boys cry and sell papers and extras through Geneva, Switzerland, the law forbids them to announce the contents. There may possibly be the most exciting news, but the boys only cry the name of the paper, and the fact that it is an extra, when they have one.

☞ Vosburg, the conductor of the sleeping car that went through the bridge at New Hamburg, had a presentiment of evil to come. When he started from Buffalo to come East, he told Mr. Gates, the sleeping car agent, that he didn't want to come; that he would give everything he had if he could be let off. He also bade his wife good-by three times, and when he left she followed him for half a mile. On the night of the accident she walked the floor all night, and when told of it in the morning, said, "Don't go any further; I expected it."

☞ Massachusetts is becoming musically esthetic. The other day they forcibly ejected a boy from the high school at Springfield because he would not study music. The youth, it appeared, had no ear for music, had tried to cultivate one, but had been told by a competent instructor that the task was useless, and he might give it up. The rules of the institution, however, said he must study music or leave, and his parents insisted that he should do neither, so the pedagogues came in their might and forcibly ejected the unfortunate victim of music.

☞ UNDOUBTING BELIEVERS.—Two Chinamen on the gallows in California recently asked that they might have the names of the witnesses who had appeared against them in court written on pieces of paper, so that they could take it with them on the long journey which was soon to begin. The names, after being written on small pieces of paper by the Chinese witnesses, were handed to them, and, after being carefully folded, were put away in their jackets, to be used on the great day of final accounts against their accusers, to convict them of perjury and false swearing.

SATURDAY EVENING POST.

PHILADELPHIA, SATURDAY, Mar. 4, 1871.

TERMS.

The terms of THE POST are the same as those of that beautiful magazine, THE LADY'S FRIEND—in order that the clubs may be made up of the paper and magazine conjointly when so desired—and are as follows:—One copy (and a large Premium Steel Engraving) $2.50; Two copies $4.00; Four copies $6.00; Five copies (and one extra) $8.00; Eight copies (and one extra) $12.00. One copy of THE POST and one of THE LADY'S FRIEND, $4.00. Every person getting up a club will receive the Premium Engraving in addition.

☞ *Club subscribers* who wish the Premium Engraving must send *one dollar extra*. To those who are not subscribers we will furnish it for *two dollars*.

Subscribers in the British Provinces must remit twenty cents extra for postage. Papers in a club will be sent to different post-offices if desired. Contents of Post and of Lady's Friend always entirely different.

Subscribers, in order to save themselves from loss, should, if possible, procure a Post-office order on Philadelphia; or get a draft on Philadelphia or New York, *payable to our order*. If a draft cannot be had, send a check payable to our order on a National Bank; if even this is not procurable, send United States notes and register the letter. Do not send money by the Express Companies, unless you pay their charges. Always be sure to name your Post-office, County, and State.

SEWING MACHINE Premium. For 80 subscribers at $2,50 apiece—or for 20 subscribers and $60—we will send Grover & Baker's No. 23 Machine, price $55. By remitting the difference of price in cash, any higher priced Machine will be sent. Every subscriber in a Premium List, inasmuch as he pays $3.50, will get the Premium Steel Engraving. The lists may be made up conjointly, if desired, of THE POST and the LADY'S FRIEND.

Samples of THE POST will be sent for 5 cents—of the Lady's Friend for 10 cents. Samples of both will be sent *free* to those desirous of getting up clubs.

Address
HENRY PETERSON & CO.,
319 Walnut St., Philadelphia.

BACK NUMBERS.

We have still a fair supply of the back numbers which contain the whole of Leonie's Mystery, and a large amount of other interesting reading—being admirable entertainment for the long winter evenings. A great chance for new subscribers.

REMOVAL.—Mr. J. A. Getze has taken the spacious wareroom at 1117 Chestnut street, where he offers a choice selection of Weber Piano Fortes, and also of Melodeons and Church Organs.

FOREIGN NEWS.

LONDON, February 24, 4.30 P. M.—The Standard has a special despatch from Versailles which announces that the treaty of peace was signed to-day by Thiers and Bismarck. Some of the details are yet unarranged, but all will be finally settled to-morrow. France pays to Germany 220,000,000 thalers. Alsace and Lorraine, including Metz and Nancy, are ceded, and the German army will not enter Paris. The Emperor William leaves on Monday for Berlin.

LONDON, Feb. 24.—The evening edition of the Times has the following despatch from Versailles to-day:—"Count Bismarck has doubts of the conclusion of peace at this time. France has asked a prolongation of the armistice. Hostilities will be renewed at midnight on the 20th. The guns of the forts have been turned towards Paris. A long conference has been held to-day."

Probably a treaty of peace has been, or will be soon signed.

THE Commissioners of Taxes of the state of New York, with David A. Wells at their head, have issued a report, advising the limitation of taxation upon personal property to the capital, shares and profits of the corporations doing a local business wholly within the state and not affected, like railroads, life insurance companies, and manufacturing companies, by competition from beyond its jurisdiction; and making all other personal property entirely free. They seem to think that the English and Pennsylvania system of not taxing personal property, will eventually give the states that practise it a great advantage over all competitors, so far as general industry and manufacturing are concerned.

☞ The coroner's jury in the New Hamburg disaster rendered their verdict on the 24th. The jury attach no blame to the employes on the oil train or the signal men, but find that the express train could have been stopped in time, "provided all the appliances had been effective, but that from some reason to the jury unknown, the patent brakes were not effectively applied."

☞ They have temperance insurance societies in Georgia which are somewhat original. Each member pays five dollars as an initiation fee and five dollars as dues each month. At the end of the year the money is divided among those who have remained faithful to the pledge. It is somewhat a matter of regret that, heretofore, this amount has generally been divided among one person.

☞ A New York paper announces that Ruloff, the murderer, will write exclusively for it until he is hanged.

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

THE GALAXY FOR MARCH contains the continuation of "Lady Judith," by Justin McCarthy; "Death in two Forms," by Julia Ward Howe;" "One Legged Men;" "About Bears," by Dona Platt;" "The Higher Education in America," "The Two Palms," and other interesting reading, both in prose and verse. Published by Sheldon & Co., New York.

LIPPINCOTT'S MAGAZINE FOR MARCH contains "The Army Medical Museum at Washington," "Sixteen Years Ago," "Italy," "Student Rambles in Prussia," "The Red Hand," "Moral of the Franco-Prussian War," and a new story by Ouida, "A Leaf in the Storm." Published by J. B. Lippincott & Co., Philadelphia.

THE MYSTERY OF EDWIN DROOD, Unfinished, and MASTER HUMPHREY'S CLOCK. By CHARLES DICKENS. Published by T. B. Peterson & Bros., Philada.

THE ATLANTIC MONTHLY FOR MARCH contains an interesting article on "Woman's Rights in Ancient Athens," "Looking for Pearls," "Kate Beaumont," "John Wesley," "Marguerite," "Shoddy," "Prelude to the Second Part of Faust," Bayard Taylor's Translation, and other first-rate articles in prose and verse. Published by James R. Osgood & Co., Boston.

SCRIBNER'S MONTHLY FOR MARCH contains "Weather Telegrams and Storm-Forecasts," "In a Garret," "The Ancient Fenians," "Victor Emmanuel's Queen," "Wilfrid Cumbermede," "The Celestials in Sunday-School," and other good matter. Published by Scribner & Co., New York.

OUR BOYS AND GIRLS FOR MARCH contains a New Story by Oliver Optic, "Cringle and Cross-Tree; or, The Sea Swashes of a Sailor," and a number of other good things. Published by Lee & Shepard, Boston.

THE LONDON QUARTERLY REVIEW FOR JANUARY, American Edition. Contains "Political Lessons of the War," "Cathedral Life and Cathedral Work," "The Revenues of India," "Our National Defences," "Count Bismarck, Prussia, and Pan-Teutonism," &c. Published by the Leonard Scott Publishing Co., 140 Fulton street, New York; and also for sale by W. B. Zieber, Philadelphia.

THE MANUFACTURER AND BUILDER FOR MARCH contains a number of very excellent articles. Published by Western & Co., 37 Park Row, New York.

THE JOURNAL OF THE FRANKLIN INSTITUTE FOR FEBRUARY contains articles on Mechanical and Civil Engineering, Chemistry, &c. Published by the Franklin Institute at their Hall, Philadelphia.

MAJOR & KNAPP'S ILLUSTRATED MONTHLY. The January number of this periodical contains four Engravings, "The First Thought," "The Mean Snow Ball," "The Young Poachers," and "Music in the Eighteenth Century," all admirably engraved and printed. Published by Major & Knapp, New York.

THE PRAIRIE FARMER ANNUAL FOR 1871. Containing valuable information for Western Farmers, Fruit Growers and Housewives. Published by the Prairie Farmer Company, Chicago.

☞ There is a man living in the mountains of North Carolina, about forty miles from Greenville, who has reached the age of 148 years. At the time of Braddock's defeat he was twenty years old, and had a wife and three children.

☞ The latest novelties are evening shoes for ladies, which are made with gilt heels and a very great deal of gold embroidery over the instep and gilt caps to the toes.

☞ Let every minister, while he is preaching, remember that God is one of his hearers.

☞ A London wag has started a rumor that Browning's "Sordello" is to be translated into English.

☞ There was a conflagration at Valparaiso, recently, and Carlotta Patti narrowly escaped death.

☞ Where to commence the civil service reforms—In our hotels and restaurants.

☞ The latest attempt to hurt the feelings editorial is in this current story: "Are you connected with a paper here?" asked a countryman of an inmate of the Indiana Insane Asylum. "O no," was the reply; "I have been to the insane asylum and been cured; a man never runs a newspaper after he is cured."

☞ Nature preaches cheerfulness in her saddest moods; she covers even forgotten graves with flowers.

☞ Greeley has a parrot that does the swearing when he isn't in. It is spoken of as a competent bird, and a visitor hardly knows when Horace is really out. (Doubtful.)

☞ The Baltimore Sun suggests, in reference to St. Valentine's day, that it be made an annual period for returning borrowed books and papers.

☞ A Boston man asks the city to compensate him for the death of his son, which, he claims, was caused by the cruel treatment of a teacher in one of the public schools.

☞ A Western editor tells of a smart boy who can "recite his Sunday-school lesson backward, with one hand tied behind him."

☞ "Dad, I come plaguy near selling my pig to Mr. Hobson to-day."

"Ah, sonny, how near did you come to it?"

"Why I ax'd him if he wanted to buy my pig, and he said no; but if he'd only said yes; how neat I'd had him, though, wouldn't I?"

☞ Great complaint is made of boy burglars in Newburyport, Massachusetts.

☞ It sometimes happens that work to be done requires an inconvenient position. A strange circumstance is mentioned in regard to Michael Angelo; after having painted the ceilings of the Sistine chapel, he could see nothing by looking down at it; if he wished to read a letter he was obliged to hold it up over his head. This inconvenience continued some months.

☞ A man who sat upon a paper of carpet tacks said they reminded him of the income tax.

☞ It is said to be intended to remove the remains of the poet Shelley from Rome to London.

☞ A Kentucky barber makes a specialty, and a fortune, of curling the hair of courting young men.

☞ The easiest and best way to expand the chest is to have a good, large heart in it. It saves the cost of gymnastics.

☞ All the young and pretty women out West are signing remonstrances against woman suffrage.

☞ China claims the origin of chromo-lithography, as far back as the beginning of the Christian era.

☞ The greatest stickler for etiquette ever heard of is a man in Michigan City, who objected to interfering with a man who was stealing wood from his woodpile, on the ground that he had never been introduced to him.

What a Ghost Story Did.

FROM THE LONDON BELGRAVIA.

It is many years ago (began Mrs. Vernon) —I was a girl of sixteen—when my father took a house for a year, two miles from a small watering-place on the Yorkshire coast. It was a very quiet place. The only house of any consequence near ours was a handsome one, with large park and beautiful gardens, belonging to a Mr. Masterton, whose family only lived there three months in the year, spending the rest of their time in London, or at a larger place he had in Northumberland. Our house—a sort of enlarged cottage, with all kinds of odd windows in still odder places, and covered with different creepers—was just outside the park-gates. We had been living there about two months —my father and mother, your aunt Constance and myself; George, being then in the army, was with his regiment in Canada, but we expected him home, on leave, the next mail—when we heard the Mastertons were coming to Holme-park for their annual visit.

There were two sons and four daughters—the two youngest being girls, about our own ages, sixteen and fifteen. The Mastertons arrived on a Friday. Our old Scotch nurse always said, "No good came of anything begun on a Friday;" and this visit was ever after her pet illustration. The dining-room windows of the cottage commanded a capital view of their gates; and we two girls spent that afternoon one at each window, and were rewarded after long watching by seeing the gardener's wife at the lodge, in a great state of fuss, opening the gates and staring down the road at least half an hour before a close carriage, a private omnibus, and three cabs from the station drove up. The gardener's wife and the servants were the only people we saw that day. As the horses in the first carriage slackened their pace, turning in at the gate, a gentleman's voice called from the window, "How are you, Mrs. Collins—flourishing, I hope? I'll come and see you to-morrow;" and that was all. Not much reward for three hours' patient watching.

The next day was thoroughly wet, and no one came to the lodge, as we half hoped they would in spite of the rain; but at half-past four a dog-cart, driven by a groom, came from the house, clearly bound for the station. An hour passed before it returned with a fair-haired man of six-and-twenty and a small bull-terrier occupying the front seat, a magnificent deer-hound lying at the man's feet, the groom and two huge portmanteaus being at the back. The driver was the eldest son—then a lieutenant in the Guards—now Colonel Masterton, the man so well known in India, to whom your uncle writes so frequently.

We saw the Mastertons at church the next Sunday. After the second service we went, as we usually did, to the vicarage for tea, where the Holme-park party also came: Mr. Masterton—a thorough country squire, strong and active, fit, in spite of his sixty years, to hold his own across country after hounds, and a capital shot; his wife, pale and delicate-looking—a sort of woman you feel assured leaves everything to be decided by her husband when young, and by her daughters when they grow up; two daughters and a governess; the eldest daughter Margaret and her second brother remaining behind in Scotland visiting some cousins.

I don't know how it was, but I took a fancy to Charley Masterton immediately. Charley, you must know, was not a boy, but a young lady of twenty. Her proper name was Charlotte; but her father, of whom she was the especial pet, had re-christened her Charley when a very little girl, because she was a regular little pickle, more like a boy than a girl; and the name had stuck to her ever since. She was not really handsome, still less would you have called her pretty; but she was essentially bright-looking—no other word suited her so well.

She was a general favorite, especially with gentlemen; they called her "so fascinating," and seemed all of them more or less in love with her dark eyes, irregular features, and bright speaking face, set off by quantities of brown hair always very fashionably dressed. She was proud of this hair, often saying it was her only beauty, so she must make the most of it. I remember thinking, that first Sunday, how I should like to have my hair done the same way, and to be a "come-out" young lady like her. So in a short time we became very intimate; hardly a day passed without our meeting; and when my brother George came home, it continued just the same.

George was then thirty—tall, with gray eyes, straight, well-cut features, golden brown hair and whiskers—in short, a very nice-looking young fellow; and very proud we were of him.

It would take too long to tell you how George Temple and Charley Masterton fell in love with each other; but so they did; and though there were difficulties at first—Mr. Masterton objecting to his daughter marrying a soldier, and Charley being too sensible to wish him to leave the army, though he was quite willing to do so for her sake—yet, on the whole, their course of love ran pretty smoothly; and it was settled they were to be married in six months, so as to join his regiment in Canada the next summer.

Mrs. Masterton had an idea her daughter was being exiled to a kind of Siberia, and moaned continually over it; and Charley's spirit of fun often prompted her to horrify her mother by predicting she should come back a regular colonial officer's wife, calling people by their surnames, and perpetually talking of "our fellows."

The days passed quickly, and March came, and the important day and all necessary arrangements were settled. It was two days before the wedding—that was fixed for the 8th of April, a Thursday. The Monday before, Charley said to my mother in her coaxing way, she should like to spend a last evening at our house; could she come that night? The next day all the guests for the marriage would arrive, and she could not well manage it then.

So it was settled that she, George (who dined almost daily at the Hall), and any of the others who liked, should walk across the park after dinner.

Accordingly about eight o'clock (people dined earlier than they do now twenty years ago) we saw them coming—Charley, George, Margaret Masterton (Charley's elder sister), her brother Robert, and a distant cousin of theirs—Major Gordon, who, his regiment having recently come into the country, spent much of his time at Holme-park.

I must describe him fully, or you will hardly understand his part in the catastrophe.

Alan Gordon, the younger son of a Scotch peer, was wonderfully superstitious, and a great hand at curious "uncanny" stories. It puzzled me then, and has done so often since, whether he really believed what he said. However, he had a remarkably *real* way of talking of the supernatural.

His stories were very odd—decidedly improbable—not to say against all reason; but he seemed to believe them himself so thoroughly, that, against your will, they impressed you. I believe he had that effect upon many strong, sensible men. I know my father, the most practical person alive, used to say his tales were most unaccountable; but "Gordon's head was in a mist, like his native mountains."

All that generation of Gordons were more or less in the same way. Of late years I have met several of them, and have heard them gravely declare the gift of second-sight was in their family. I am sure Alan believed so, though it seems unheard of in these days that educated people could be so superstitious.

Putting aside this belief in ghostly appearances, in other respects Major Gordon was a sensible man, extremely agreeable, and a general favorite in society. He was about forty—a tall powerful man, with light hair, and a round good-natured face; but his naturally merry expression was spoilt by a habit of rolling his eyes when speaking, till often only the whites were visible. He was a thorough soldier; had been much on foreign service, consequently the Mastertons knew very little of him. Indeed, I do not think the younger part of the family had ever seen him till his visit to Holme-park some two months before; but they liked him much now, Charley especially. She was always asking about his adventures, and getting him to tell her stories. She owned they frightened her; that she could not bear to think of them afterwards; still there was a fascination in them.

I don't know whether I ever told you, one curious thing about Charley was her horror of the dark. A dark room sent a shudder through her. It was extremely silly, and she often said as much, knowing nothing could hurt her; but still the fear remained. She never seemed able to get over it. I do not think any power on earth would have tempted her to stay five minutes by herself in perfect darkness. We used to fancy she had been frightened, when a child, by a foolish nurse; but that never was proved. You can imagine how we all, and especially the Masterton boys, teased her, calling her "a goose, and afraid of her own shadow;" but it was of no avail; and all had at last become so used to her fear, no notice was taken of it.

Well, that Monday night they came—three Mastertons and Major Gordon. It was a lovely night; the air warm as June, the moon just rising, as we went across the lawn to meet them. There were exclamations on the beauty of the weather, and many hopes that Thursday would be as fine; my father laughingly telling Charley, "If it rained, she must put off her wedding: rain was so unlucky."

Upon this Major Gordon, who was walking with my mother and Margaret Masterton, turned round, and said in fun,

"Mark my words, Charley; that wedding of yours won't come off—you will see. Remember the proverb, 'There's many a slip,' &c."

We little thought, as we listened to her merry reply, "If Captain Temple changes his mind, you'll have to take compassion on a forlorn damsel and marry me yourself; and that will be a punishment for your impertinence, sir; for I shall plague your life out"—we little thought how sadly true his words would prove.

I must make my story short, though it is difficult to do so, remembering, as I do, every action—nay, every trivial word spoken that evening. They passed unheeded at the time, till the awful end of that merry party stamped everything connected with it on my brain, till nothing will efface the impression.

We lingered some time in the garden, then went into the house and had tea; and it must have been nearly ten o'clock, when, sitting in the drawing-room talking, Margaret (poor girl, it has quite haunted her since to think that she proposed it) said,

"Alan should tell one of his stories. Mrs. Temple, have you ever heard one of cousin Alan's ghost-stories? He tells them wonderfully. Wouldn't you like to hear him? Charley actually believes in ghosts, and Alan says she is as good as a Scotchwoman?"

Several of us exclaimed,

"It would be capital fun; and Major Gordon must tell one."

He agreed; but said the lights must be put out; no one could tell a good horrible story in the face of two lamps and four candles; and if the blinds were up, there would be just the proper ghostly light. He had his way; and I remember well how bright the moon shone, making the grass look like snow contrasted with the intense blackness of the clump of tall trees some twenty yards off.

The room we were in had a large bow-window at one end. Close to this window, but rather in shadow, so that only the outline of his figure was visible, sat Major Gordon; near him, on a low chair, was Margaret Masterton; and Charley was on the floor at her feet, with her hands clasped on her sister's knee, and her eyes gazing out into the moonlight, apparently fascinated by the weird shadows. The rest of the party were scattered in other parts of the darkened room.

"It is at least ten years ago," began Major Gordon, "that I was taking a walking tour through the northern part of Sutherlandshire. It is a curious part of the country for such an expedition; I can hardly say why I chose it—perhaps from its being almost the only spot in my native land I knew literally nothing of. I had been shooting woodcock with some fellows in the Hebrides, and a very jolly party we made. When our sport was over, we all went east together. At Stour I left them, starting on my own hook, in spite of much chaff at my choosing such a country and such a time—the end of November—for a tour. I suppose none of you have been in Sutherlandshire; it is just about the wildest, most desolate place you can imagine; the wild, grand scenery that impresses one with admiration, mingled with a sense of one's own insignificance. As I walked day after day through immense tracts of moorland, hardly ever meeting a human creature, a feeling of loneliness and utter desolation—a sort of hopelessness of ever again arriving at civilization—came over me, and I resolved, that as it was my first, so it should be my last visit to Sutherlandshire.

"I must tell you there were hardly any inns. I generally slept at farm-houses. The people were hospitable, though primitive, and my welcome was generally cordial. I went on in this way for a week, when, feeling I had had quite enough of it, I started one morning from my sleeping quarters, intending to walk some twenty miles to a town on the coast, whence a coach went monthly to Inverness. I missed my way; for, as night began to close, I found my road stopped by a small river, with no means of crossing it. I followed the banks for perhaps three miles. At last I saw a light; on nearer approach I found it came from a considerable-sized house. Though now inhabited by a farmer, it had evidently seen better days; there were remains of handsome gates; part of the original house had been pulled down, part converted into farm buildings. One wing remained perfect, and towards a door in the centre of this I directed my steps. After much knocking, the door was opened by a servant-girl, who stared when I asked if I could have a bed for the night; and saying she would ask 'the master,' shut the door. When the master came—a rather stupid though pleasant-looking man—he seemed doubtful, was afraid they had no room for strangers, but would see; I might come in and have a rest and a bit of supper, if I pleased. Nothing loath, I followed him into a comfortable kitchen, where his wife was busy preparing the meal; and in a few minutes we sat down to enjoy it—myself, the farmer, his wife, the girl who had come to the door, three or four farm-laborers, and an old woman, deaf and seemingly half-witted—the farmer's mother, as I found afterwards.

"After supper I asked about my bed. Then arose a difficulty. The wife said, 'There was no room.' I suggested, 'The kitchen would do.' She said, 'The mother slept there.' I asked, 'Was there another house near?' She said, 'Not for six miles.' At last the farmer whispered something to his wife. She exclaimed, 'For Heaven's sake, don't put the gentleman there!' I asked, 'Where?' And the man explained: There were two rooms they had never used; there were queer noises in them—he believed they were haunted; but perhaps one of them might be better than the big barn, the only alternative? I said, 'Certainly; I would face the ghosts.' And, in spite of the earnest entreaties of the wife, so it was settled.

"I went with the farmer to inspect the rooms, and chose the smaller of the two. There was no furniture in either, but the farming men brought in three benches; we placed them side by side, spread some blankets on them, and my bed was ready. A glorious fire was made up, and, in spite of ghosts, I congratulated myself on my quarters. On returning to the kitchen for my knapsack, the moment I appeared, the old woman ran towards me—I had no idea anything so bent and crooked had such pace in her—and flinging herself on her knees before me, prayed me, 'For God's sake, do not sleep in that accursed room!'

"This rather startled me; but I thought her out of her mind, so tried to soothe her, assuring her nothing was likely to happen; I was sure there was nothing in the rooms, and wondered they did not see them. She only grew more earnest, sobbing and rocking herself backwards and forwards, crying, 'I should be dead before morning! She knew I should! It was just the same before!'

"Her words seemed strange, but she looked a poor demented creature; so, finding my soothing quite ineffectual, I cut the matter short by taking my bag and leaving the kitchen. I wished the farmer good-night outside my door, and was alone. The hot kitchen, after the long cold walk, had made me drowsy. Before many minutes I was in bed and asleep. How long I slept, I know not. Something, I can hardly tell what, awoke me. The fire had burnt low, still there was sufficient light to see there was no one in the room save myself; but an icy chill crept over me, a consciousness of not being alone possessed me. I sat up and stared round. There was nothing. Still the feeling grew stronger. Suddenly I heard a groan—another, deeper, louder, nearer—and a hand, cold like a corpse's, was laid on my shoulder. I started round; every particle of blood froze in my veins, for I saw—"

At this moment Major Gordon uttered a loud piercing shriek. It was a trick. The whole story had been nonsense! He only did it to frighten us; but—the effect was terrible. His shriek was hardly done, when, almost joined to it, we heard a most fearful cry, a long agonising scream. You can never realise what it was like. I shall never forget it. It seemed really like a spirit being torn out of its body. Another, louder still, but stopping suddenly—not as it were ended, but broken off in the middle—and Charley Masterton's head fell heavily on her sister's knee. Every one started up. Major Gordon said,

"Who screamed? You're none of you frightened, are you?"

Margaret laid her hand on Charley's head, saying,

"My darling, what is the matter? Didn't you know that it was only Alan's nonsense? I knew his voice directly!"

Then, as she grew frightened at the silence,

"O, Charley! what is it? Do speak!"

But there was no answer. George sprang across the room.

"She has fainted. Bring a light. Some one get a candle, or anything."

He lifted her up; lights were brought; and she was laid on the sofa; but still she neither moved nor spoke. George kept repeating,

"She has only fainted, she has only fainted."

But I saw how his whole frame shook, and his face became deadly pale; and a dreadful fear came over me that she would never speak again. Alas, alas, it was so! Charley Masterton was dead; had died of sheer fright! She lay there with an awful terror fixed on her face. We all stood round for some seconds, too awe-stricken to do anything; George, supporting her head on his arm, repeating over and over again,

"She has only fainted! Can't you see it is only fainting?"

But at last he grew silent. Then my father spoke.

"I will send for a doctor."

He walked to the door, and we heard him outside giving orders for the groom to start immediately. When he came back, laying his hand on George's arm,

"My poor boy!" he said, "I have sent for Blake; but I fear—I fear nothing can be done."

Then turning to young Masterton,

"Some one must break this to your father; can you do it?"

At his words Robert Masterton roused himself; since the first he had stood motionless by the sofa, hardly realising his sister's state. Now he started, stooped, pressed his lips on her forehead; then all of a sudden seeming to understand, strode across the room to where Major Gordon sat, shook him roughly by the shoulder, saying in a voice low, but fierce with concentrated passion,

"You murderer! look at your work! How dare you try your devilish trick upon her! Go and tell my father you have killed his daughter; you are the fittest person to tell him. Go! By heaven, if Temple does not kill you, I will!"

When Charley was first laid on the sofa, Alan Gordon looked once on her face. He had seen death too often to doubt its aspect now. Then he walked to the window, sat down, burying his face in his clasped hands, and never moved till he heard Robert's words. Now he sprang up, confronting him haughtily; a savage frown darkening his face; gradually it faded; a look of intense pain succeeded, a look of almost agonized regret, and he answered in a low broken voice,

"I never meant to hurt her. I would give my life, ay, ten lives, to undo this night's work; I did it in fun—devilish fun, you say right—but—but—" Here a sob broke his voice: he walked to the door, then said, "I will go and tell them! It will kill my uncle: I shall be a double murderer."

His hand was on the door. Suddenly he turned, rushed across the room, flinging himself on the floor by the sofa.

"O, Charley! dear Charley! you cannot be dead! It is not true! I have not killed you! Say so! O, speak!"

My mother gently pushed him away, saying—

"Go—do go; you can do no good; don't stay here."

He rose, staggered across the room; my father followed him out and shut the door.

We that remained tried various restoratives, feeling their utter uselessness, but from a feeling of restless anxiety to try something. Then the doctor came. A brief examination only confirmed the worst. It was all over, poor Charley's short bright life; and nothing remained but to carry her home—the senseless body to its earthly home. But the spirit, the kind loving heart? ah! we could not doubt whither that had gone—to the only true home, compared with which the brightest, happiest earthly lot (and Charley's had been a very bright happy one) fades into utter blankness.

I cannot describe the rest. You must picture to yourself the father's intense grief, the mother's silent anguish; the awful stillness in the house so lately resounding with merry wedding preparations, as they bore her, a pale silent corpse, on the very road she should have travelled a happy bride, under the half-finished arches the village people had been busy all day erecting; the church-bell sadly, solemnly tolling out the twenty-one years. It must have been just midnight, for the bell had hardly ceased when the clock struck twelve; and I remember well the awful shudder I felt—(it seems to creep through me now)—the feeling some one else must be dead, that that bell would never be still—would go on tolling forever.

I need not tell you how George felt this cutting off at one blow of all his happiness. Poor dear fellow, he has never got over it yet. It was very quiet, very deep grief; I do not think he ever shed a tear. Never to this day has he spoken of her; but I have seen him—ay, not a year ago—shudder and turn pale at the careless mention of the name Charley; and I am very sure his only wish, his only hope, has been to follow her, to meet her again, never to be parted. But people do not die for wishing; and after long years in India (he went there six months after her death), after active service during the Mutiny, and many hardships, he is still a strong man; but, as you all know, he always seems one burdened, almost broken down, with heavy secret sorrow. And this was the cause—a seemingly trivial thing, which many would call a harmless practical joke; and yet look at the awful consequences!

Major Gordon I have never seen, since he left the country immediately, and for many years was never even heard of; but I believe he is alive still.

The Masterton family are much scattered; some married, some dead—but hush! not another word on the subject; here comes your uncle George!

Interesting to Ladies.

"I have used the Grover & Baker, Wheeler & Wilson, Singer, Florence and Finkle & Lyon machines, and much prefer the Grover & Baker, as in my opinion, the most durable, efficient and desirable sewing machine in use. I would not use any other machine in my family, as I believe the Grover & Baker has no equal."

MRS. S. H. MORRISON,
South Camden, N. J.

A Dialogue in Wall Street.

It is a vulgar error to suppose that the *habitues* of Wall street converse about nothing but stocks and gold. Sometimes they talk about their health; and they all seem to have one trouble—*biliousness*. The wear and tear of speculation invariably tells upon the liver.

"How do you think I'm looking?" said a well-known "Bull" to a friend in the Long Room, a few days after the late smash-up in gold; "Do I look panic-struck?"

"No; by Jove!" was the reply; "you look in trim to fight for a man's life. Never saw you looking better."

"Let me tell you a secret, my boy," returned the great operator: "I drink no wine, no brandy, no bar-room stimulant of any kind; but I just keep my commise up with an occasional dose of PLANTATION BITTERS; and if you'll do me the favor to try it for that bile on the stomach you're always complaining of, I'll furnish the margin for your next spec, if it doesn't cure you."

The gentleman referred to (the initial of whose Christian name is not very far from the end of the alphabet) has unbounded confidence in the restorative; and his bright eye, firm nerves, and wonderful powers of endurance, prove that it is well-founded.

SEA MOSS FARINE from pure Irish Moss, for blanc mange, puddings, custards, creams, &c., &c. The cheapest, healthiest, and most delicious food in the world.

PSYCHOMANCY.—Any lady or gentleman can make $1,000 a month, secure their own happiness and independence, by obtaining PSYCHOMANCY, FASCINATION, or SOUL CHARMING. 400 pages; cloth. Full instructions to use this power over man or animals at will; how to Mesmerize, become Trance or Writing Mediums, Divination, Spiritualism, Alchemy, Philosophy of Omens and Dreams, Brigham Young's Harem, Guide to Marriage, &c., all contained in this book; 150,000 sold; price by mail, in cloth $1.50, paper covers $1. NOTICE.—Any person willing to act as agent will receive a sample copy of the work free. As no capital is required, all desirous of genteel employment should send for the book, enclosing 15cts. for postage, to T. W. EVANS & CO., 41 South Eighth Street, Philadelphia.

nov19-6teow.

Good Soap, Like Good Wine, is Improved by Age.—Among the ruins of Herculaneum and Pompeii soap was found in a good state of preservation, after having been buried over 1700 years.

A box of soap in a family is better than "*money at interest*," as when from three to six months old, one pound will go further than three pounds of new soap.

Ask your grocer for a box of CRAMPTON'S IMPERIAL LAUNDRY SOAP, and if he does not keep it, send your order to CRAMPTON BROTHERS, 84 Front street, New York. Liberal commission to clubs.

oct1-tf

HEALTH! BEAUTY!!

STRONG, PURE AND RICH
BLOOD, INCREASE OF FLESH AND
WEIGHT, CLEAR SKIN AND
BEAUTIFUL COMPLEXION
SECURED TO ALL.
RADWAY'S SARSAPARILLIAN
RESOLVENT HAS MADE
THE MOST
ASTONISHING CURES.
SO QUICK, SO RAPID ARE THE
CHANGES THE BODY UNDERGOES
UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF THIS
TRULY WONDERFUL MEDICINE,
THAT EVERY DAY AN INCREASE IN
FLESH AND WEIGHT IS SEEN AND FELT.

Scrofula, Consumption,
Glandular Disease,
Ulcers in the Throat and Mouth,
Tumors, Nodes in the Glands,
And other parts of the system,
Sore Eyes,
Strumous diseases of the
Eyes, Nose, Mouth,

And the worst forms of Skin Diseases,
Eruptions, Fever Sores, Scald Head,
Ring Worm, Salt Rheum, Erysipelas,
Acne, Black Spots,
Worms in the Flesh, Tumors,
Cancers in the Womb,
And all Kidney, Bladder, Urinary and

Womb Diseases, Gravel, Diabetes,
Dropsy, Stoppage of Water,
Incontinence of Urine,
Bright's Disease,
Weakness and Painful Discharges,
Night Sweats,
Are within the curative range of

RADWAY'S SARSAPARILLIAN RESOLVENT,

and a few days' use will prove to any person using it for either of these forms of disease, its potent power to cure them.

ONE DOLLAR A BOTTLE.

Principal office 87 Maiden Lane, New York.
Sold by Druggists. oct1-tf

Cheering Facts for the Bilious.

Every day demonstrates more clearly that liver complaint, in all its distressing forms, can be controlled and cured without difficulty or inconvenience. It is an obstinate disease, but its obstinacy is not proof against the pertinacious, remedial and restorative operation of HOSTETTER'S STOMACH BITTERS. That genial corrective *compels the organ to do its duty*. It *must* secrete regularly and healthfully under the influence of the Bitters. Their action brings it back from a state of rebellion into perfect harmony with the laws of health. If there is costiveness, it disappears; if there is side-ache or back-ache, it ceases; if the skin and the whites of the eyes are tinged with superfluous bile, they recover their natural hue; if the appetite is gone, it returns; if the digestion is impaired, it is restored; in brief, whatever the symptoms of the complaint may be, and whatever the phase it has assumed, *a cure is certain*. Such are the uniform effects of this preparation where bilious disease has been already developed; but in cases where there is merely a constitutional tendency to liver complaint, it may be prevented throughout life by the regular use, in small quantities, of this palatable antidote. These are proven facts, and should be seriously pondered—or, rather, they should be promptly acted upon—by all persons of bilious habit. mh4-4t

CONSUMPTION CAN BE CURED BY LIEBIG'S LIFE CURE. Sample package and treatise free.
Address, Dr. T. F. BURT, 737 Sixth Avenue, New York. jan31-13t

TO CURE a Cough, Cold or Sore Throat, use *BROWN'S BRONCHIAL TROCHES*.
nov26-6m

FOR MOTH PATCHES, FRECKLES AND TAN,

use *PERRY'S MOTH AND FRECKLE LOTION*. It is reliable and harmless. Sold by druggists everywhere. Depot, 49 Bond st., New York.
jan7-3m

PIMPLES ON THE FACE.

For Pimply Eruptions, Black Heads, Flesh Worms, or Grubs, and Blotched Disfigurations on the *Face*, use *PERRY'S COMEDONE AND PIMPLE REMEDY*. Prepared only by Dr. B. C. PERRY, Dermatologist, 49 Bond St., New York. Sold by druggists everywhere.

Wholesale in Philadelphia by JOHNSON, HOLLOWAY & COWDEN, 602 Arch St. jan7-3m

MARRIAGES.

☞ Marriage notices must be sent to us within 30 days, and be signed by a responsible name.

On the 2d of Feb., by the Rev. W. J. Codville, JAMES R. CONNELLY to HARRIET L. CLIFT, both of this city.

On the 9th of Feb., by the Rev. Jacob Nixon, Mr. HENRY H. GARDY to Mrs. EMMA B. SCHNEIDER, both of this city.

On the 16th of Feb., by the Rev. Willard M. Rice, D. D., Mr. JOSEPH GREER to Miss ELIZA SMITH, all of this city.

On the 12th of Feb., by the Rev. W. T. Eva, Mr. JOHN A. LAWRENCE to Miss BELLA NICHOLS, all of this city.

On the 16th of Feb., by the Rev. Jacob Miller, Mr. WILSON YOUNG to Miss MARY HENDERSON, both of this city.

On the 20th of Feb., by the Rev. Wm. H. Barrell, Mr. WM. J. DUNYEE to Miss MARY A. HAYMAN, both of this city.

DEATHS.

☞ Notices of Deaths must always be accompanied by a responsible name.

On the 17th of Feb., FRANCIS COOPER, in the 38th year of his age.

On the 17th of Feb., Mr. WM. FOLWELL, Sr., in the 81st year of his age.

On the 18th of Feb., JOHN W. GILLINGHAM, in the 51st year of his age.

On the 17th of Feb., ELLEN WARD, in the 64th year of her age.

On the 15th of Feb., JOHN W. SIDDLE, Sr., in the 80th year of his age.

On the 17th of Feb., GROVER J. HAUSE, in the 21st year of his age.

On the 15th of Feb., SARAH LONG, in the 74th year of her age.

On the 16th of Feb., Mr. JAMES STEWART, in the 74th year of his age.

On the 18th of Feb., HENRY L. BERRY, in the 21st year of his age.

On the 17th of Feb., R. L. MOSS, in the 62th year of his age.

On the 17th of Feb., HENRIETTA C. EVARD, in the 25th year of her age.

THE COMING YEAR.

We may note especially among our arrangements for the coming year, a new story called

DENE HOLLOW

By Mrs. HENRY WOOD, author of "East Lynne," "Bessy Rane," &c.

We may add that it is always the aim of Mrs. Wood, in her stories, to combine a high degree of interest with the inculcation of some moral lesson. And it is this which renders her stories such favorites with the great majority of readers.

We commenced in THE POST of Jan. 7th, a

STORY OF ADVENTURE

By GUSTAVE AIMARD, author of "The Queen of the Savannah," "Last of the Incas," &c.

Aimard writes a stirring story, full of thrilling incidents by flood and field, of hair-breadth escapes, &c., in which both his heroes and his heroines take part.

In addition to these, of course, we shall give a succession of other stories, both original and selected, of the usual excellent quality.

But the desire of THE POST is always to combine instruction with amusement, solid intellectual meats and bread and potatoes with its pies, preserves and puddings. We aim also to give, therefore, during the coming year,

INSTRUCTIVE ARTICLES

on a great variety of subjects, original, and selected from all quarters. We should be sorry to have our readers say that they had perused a single number of THE POST without being wiser in some respect than they were before.

THREE MONTHS GRATIS.

We are still able to offer all *NEW* subscribers

3 MONTHS FOR NOTHING,

beginning their subscriptions for 1871 with the paper of October 8th, which contains the beginning of LEONIE'S MYSTERY, by Frank Lee Benedict. This is

THIRTEEN PAPERS

IN ADDITION to the regular weekly numbers for 1871, or

FIFTEEN MONTHS IN ALL!

WE HAVE A GOODLY SUPPLY OF BACK NUMBERS STILL ON HAND.

This offer applies to all NEW subscribers, single or in clubs. See our low Terms on the second page of this paper.

Power of Imagination.

A physician in Savannah relates a remarkable case of the influence of imagination upon the human body. He was called to see a lady who was afflicted with a cold, and, of course, a sore throat. He wrote a prescription, and gave it to the lady, with the following instruction:

"Madam, put this in a tumbler full of water, and take a tablespoonful every two hours."

The next day he called to see her, when she informed him that a tablespoonful of the medicine had made her so sick that she had reduced the dose to a teaspoonful, but that she was much better. He paid her a third visit, when she informed him that she was still improving, but that the medicine was so powerful that a teaspoonful produced vomiting, and she had been compelled to stop taking it. The doctor said:

"I suppose it is nearly all gone."

The lady said the tumbler was on the mantel, and he could see how much was left. The doctor says:

"I looked at the tumbler, and I'm blessed if I didn't find that she had put my paper on which my prescription was written in the tumbler, and had been taking nothing but water!"

[Homeopathists would not feel quite so certain that this was a proof of the power of the imagination. Powerful drugs are sometimes used in the preparation of paper, and the lady might have been taking a homeopathic dose of arsenic or some other potent drug.]

It Must be True.

A very old man came to King Agis of Sparta to lament over the degeneracy of the times. The king replied, "What you say must be true, for I remember that, when I was a boy, I heard my father say that when he was a boy he heard my grandfather say the same thing."

It is a sufficient answer to most of the croakers, that doubtless the same things have been said in every generation since the beginning of recorded time. Till within twenty years, for instance, it has been the accepted theory that civilized society lost in vigor what it gained in refinement. This is now generally admitted to be a delusion growing out of the fact that civilization keeps alive many who would have died under barbarism. These feebler persons enter into the average and keep down the apparent health of the community; but it is the triumph of civilization that they exist at all. I am inclined to think that when we come to compare the nineteenth century with the seventeenth, as regards the health of women and the size of families, we shall find much the same result.—*T. W. H.*

☞ "Life," said Leibnitz, "sleeps in the mineral, dreams in the flower, wakens in man."

THE HOUSE OF DEATH.

BY LOUISE CHANDLER MOULTON.

[Col. John Hay, in his "Castilian Days," tells the story of a noble Duke who shut up his stately mansion when his dead wife was carried out of it, and left it to fall into decay in the midst of surrounding life.]

Not a hand has lifted the latchet
Since she went out of the door—
No footstep shall cross the threshold
Since she can come in no more.

There is rust upon locks and hinges,
And mold and blight on the walls,
And silence faints in the chambers,
And darkness waits in the halls—

Waits as all things have waited
Since she went, that day of Spring,
Borne in her pallid splendor
To dwell in the Court of the King:

With lilies on brow and bosom,
With robes of silken sheen,
And her wonderful frozen beauty
The lilies and silk between.

Red roses she left behind her,
But they died long, long ago—
'Twas the odorous ghost of a blossom
That seemed through the dusk to glow.

The garments she left mock the shadows
With hints of womanly grace,
And her image haunts the mirror
That was so used to her face.

The birds make insolent music
Where the sunshine riots outside,
And the winds are merry and wanton,
With the Summer's pomp and pride.

But into this desolate mansion,
Where love has closed the door,
Nor sunshine nor Summer shall enter,
Since she can come in no more.

The Bible:

Illustrated by Oriental Usages.

BY MRS. FANNIE R. FEUDGE.

Job—Houses of Clay—Shelter of the Rock, &c.

The book of Job, probably the oldest in existence, abounds in beautiful and striking Oriental allusions, some of which are selected as the subjects of the present sketch.

Though it is not known with certainty who was the author of this book, or at what precise time the events he narrated, took place; much concurrent testimony points to *Moses* as the writer; and the time of his long sojourn in Midian as the period when he compiled, either from existing documents, or from oral tradition this remarkable history—deeming it probably well suited to "justify the ways of God to man," and to console his afflicted brethren under their sore trials. Job must have lived to the age of nearly two hundred years, since he had many sons grown and long settled in their own houses at the time of his trial; and he frequently refers to his own youth as a season long past—and yet he survived his calamities a hundred and forty years. This longevity, together with the fact of his officiating as household priest over his own family, according to primitive usage; and his wealth being reckoned in cattle would all seem to place Job in the patriarchal period, not earlier than the times of Abraham, nor later than those of Jacob. The countries in which Job and his three friends resided appear to have been portions of that occupied by Abraham and his descendants in various lines; while the land of Uz, in which Job himself dwelt, must have been identical with the ultimate abode of Esau and his descendants, called by them the land of Edom; since the Prophet Jeremiah says in his Lamentations, iv. 21, "Rejoice and be glad, daughter of Edom, that *dwellest in the land of Uz.*"

Job's malady, denominated by our translators "boils," Dr. Good, after the most careful and extended investigations, pronounces *elephantiasis*, or Arabian leprosy, one of the most terrible diseases known to man. Paul of Ægina characterizes it as a "universal ulcer;" the Latins called it "black leprosy" to distinguish it from the white or common variety; the Greeks, "elephantiasis," from the peculiar, dark-colored, scabrous appearance of the skin which it induces; and the Arabians call it "*dual-a-sad*," or lion bloat, from the grim, lion-like features of those affected by this fearful disease. With such a malady can we wonder that the poor sufferer on whom the great Adversary seems to have exhausted all the terrible inventiveness of his crafty and cruel nature should have sat him "down among the ashes;" or that his friends, seeing him from afar, should have failed to recognize in this bloated, scarred, and disfigured wreck one vestige of the former noble features and manly lineaments of him with whom they came to condole. Is it strange that they found no words with which to comfort the stricken man; or that, in the expressive language of the inspired writer, "they lifted up their voices and wept, and they rent every one his mantle, and sprinkled dust upon their heads toward heaven." Thus, even at the present day, do all Oriental nations manifest real or affected grief—the sincere regret with which one mourns for a brother beloved, or the semblance of a sorrow that *propriety* demands.

The clothes are torn or exchanged for garments of sackcloth; the hair dishevelled, or perhaps shaven off closely; dust or ashes sprinkled over the head; and in many instances, the body cut with knives; the flesh torn with the nails, and other acts of violence inflicted on the person. When the Queen Mother of Siam died some years ago, every female in the kingdom was required to shave her head, and wear some badge of mourning during all the eight months that intervened between the death and the incineration of the body.

Job's friends are represented in chap. ii. 13, as sitting "with him upon the ground seven days and nights." This is the ordinary manner and time required by Oriental usage, for mourning for *the dead;* and goes to show how very desperate these three men considered the case of their friend—still alive, but so grievously afflicted that restoration seemed impossible, and they mourn him as one on whom the fell destroyer has already seized.

In chap. iv. 18, 19, occurs the beautiful passage so often quoted as indicative of the frailty of human life: "Behold he put no trust in his servants, and his angels he charged with folly: how much less in them that dwell in houses of clay, whose foundation is in the dust, which are crushed before the moth?"

All readily understand the expression, "houses of clay" to refer to the mortal body, the temporary residence of the immortal spirit; but to the Oriental, the passage has a much fuller import. He sees in it the implied figures of a sovereign, who being so far exalted above even the favored ones that dwell in his immediate presence under the proud shelter of the royal roof, certainly could never condescend to regard the poverty-stricken wretches that have their only home in mud hovels—a mere shelter, "whose foundation is in the dust," where the poor inmates find their only resting-place by day and by night, on the sandy soil. Thus the Supreme Ruler of the Universe, far exalted above the bright, sinless, undying beings who surround his throne, and dwell ever in His presence, may not stoop to notice *man*, clothed with a body that must soon return to its kindred dust, and endowed with a spark of life so feeble that the wing of the veriest insect may extinguish it forever. Such is the argument drawn from this figure.

In the continuation of his argument, Eliphaz adverting to the short-lived prosperity of the foolish, and the evil that shall ultimately come upon him, says: "They (the children of the foolish) are crushed in the gate, neither is there any to deliver them." This is a striking Oriental allusion *to the courts held in the gates*, where sooner or later, the children may be made to answer for the offences of the parent, or their own; perhaps to make restitution of the father's unjust gains; and owing to the obloquy resting upon their *inherited* names, no advocate will undertake their cause, or the judge himself may be unduly severe on these scions of an evil house.

In chap. vi. 17, occur the words: "What time they (the brooks) wax warm they vanish; when it is hot they are consumed out of their place;" and then the thirsty traveller is described as seeking from them the refreshment he so much needs, but fails utterly to find, and turns away in confusion.

The whole passage, from verse 15 to 20, is a beautiful allusion to the streams so common in hot and sandy countries, which, at one season, when rain and snow are abundant, become swollen to creeks of considerable size; but during the long and burning droughts of summer are completely dried up, till their course can be traced only by the parched and desolate bed through which they have flowed.

Verses 19, 20, contain a striking description of the eagerness with which the thirsty caravans hasten to these little brooks, hoping to be refreshed with the cool water they are longing for; and their disappointment and distress on finding the streams wholly dried up. Boothroyd's version is very expressive:

"The companies of Tema anxiously look;
The caravans of Sheba eagerly expect them.
They are ashamed, because of their confidence;
They come thither, and are confounded."

How touchingly descriptive is the figure thus employed by the poor suffering Job, of the sympathy he had longed for, and eagerly expected from his friends; and his bitter disappointment, when forced in anguish of heart, to cry out: "Miserable comforters are ye all."

In the same pitcous strain, is breathed forth his lament in regard God's dealings with him; under the figure of a bond-slave toiling in the heat, and longing for the rest and shelter the evening is to bring with it when he may cease from his toil, and be no longer exposed to the fierce rays of the burning sun—"As a servant earnestly desireth the shadow—And as an hireling looketh for the reward of his work."—Chap. vii., 2.

One who has never traversed the burning plains of those sultry eastern lands, fails to realize the intense longing of the weary traveller for the shelter of some friendly wall or overhanging rock, against whose refreshing coolness he may recline. Isaiah well understood this yearning when he speaks of God, not only as "a refuge from the storm," but "a shadow from the heat."—Is. xxv., 4; and again in chap. xxxii., 2, he likens the blessings of the Messiah's kingdom to "a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place; as *the shadow of a great rock* in a weary land." With the same almost rapturous delight, does the tired traveller over those burning plains, see the evening shades gather about him, as the curtains of the dewy night shut out the fiery glances of the king of day. Thus did poor, weary, tempted Job long for death to free him forever from the insupportable anguish he was enduring, and usher his ransomed spirit into the life-giving presence of the unseen "Preserver of them," against whom he confesses to have sinned, and prays that his transgressing may be pardoned, and his iniquity taken away, ere he "sleep in the dust," and "in the morning shall not be."

A Scrap from Burmah.

In the happy days when Karbathan Parah was King of the Burmese, a potter formed in his heart an evil plot against the prosperity of his neighbor, a wealthy washerman who lived in the same village. The envious potter, bent on injuring his good neighbor, went to the palace of the king, and thus addressed him:

"O illustrious prince! is it not well known in the mountains and valleys of our land that all the calamities which have come so severely and suddenly upon your kingdom of late years, have arisen from the fact that your majesty has no longer the charm of a white elephant, since the unfortunate death of the lucky white elephant which belonged to your father, who now reposes in rapture in the seventh heaven of the blessed immortals! Do you not know, O king, that the elephant which now carries you is but a common black beast, which brings only black luck to us? Having, therefore, your prosperity and glory at heart, O king, and kissing the dust from your golden feet, I venture to propose the following plan to your majesty: There is a washerman in this city of extraordinary skill in washing or dyeing white everything brought to him, however black it may be, and however difficult to make white and beautiful. Let, now, my lord the king consider well the word of his servant, and bid this skillful washerman to wash your royal elephant white, so that the white days of prosperity may once more dawn upon your blessed majesty and on the realm."

The king, who was weak in mind, heard the potter's project with delight, and readily assented to it. He summoned the skillful washerman, whose fame was great, and thus addressed him:

"I command thee, most loyal subject, to use thy skill in washing my elephant white, that I may enjoy white days of prosperity even as my father before me."

But the washerman, who was a shrewd man, and ready withal, suspecting the plot of the potter to ruin him by so vain a project, thus spoke to the king—

"O my lord king! that I may wash my lord's royal elephant white, a suitable washing-house must be erected, and also a pot of corresponding size must be constructed, and then I will wash your majesty's highly respected elephant white, and feel myself thrice blessed in having carried out my lord the king's wishes."

On this the king summoned the potter, and enjoined on him, on pain of his royal displeasure, to construct a vast pot of sufficient dimensions to hold the royal elephant, as well as a sufficient quantity of water and other constituents for the ablution. The potter, in fear and trembling, collected an immense mass of clay, out of which he constructed a pot large enough to hold the royal elephant.

When, however, the elephant stepped into this huge pot it broke into several pieces. Another pot was made of considerable thickness by the potter, who, do as he would, could not even by his largest fires bake it thoroughly, so as to make it both compact and strong. So the unfortunate potter was in this dilemma: if he made a thin pot it was broke by the weight of the elephant, and if he made it thick enough to resist such a weight, he could not, with all his efforts, get the pot sufficiently baked; and was obliged at last to give up the task as beyond his power, and to brave the royal displeasure, which consigned him to a prison for the rest of his life, and confiscated his goods.

"Plot not against thy neighbor," says the Burmese proverb, "lest thine own property suffer by the plot"—a proverb which is here well enforced.

A LESSON.

Last night I weighed, quite wearied out,
The question that perplexes still;
And that sad spirit we call doubt
Made the good naught beside the ill.

This morning, when with rested mind
I try again the self-same theme,
The whole is altered, and I find
The balance turned, the good supreme.

A little sleep, a brief night's rest,
Has changed the look of all that is!
Sure any creed I hold at best
Needs humble holding after this.

The Founder of Buddhism.

BY E. P. WHIPPLE.

Seven centuries before the Christian era, a prince of one of the royal families of India, having exhausted, in his twenty-ninth year, all the pleasures of the world, and having in him one of the deepest, most comprehensive, and most creative of human intellects, suddenly abandoned in disgust his palace, his family, his treasures, and his state; took the name of Gotama, which means, "he who kills the senses;" became a religious mendicant; walked about in a shroud taken from the dead body of a female slave; taught, preached, and gathered about him a body of enthusiastic disciples, bound together by the most efficient of all ecclesiastical organizations; dictated or inspired works which, as now published by the Chinese government in four languages, occupy eight hundred volumes; and died at the age of eighty, the founder of the Buddhist religion. Compared with this man, Mahomet was an ignorant and ferocious barbarian; and the proudest names in Western philosophy lose a little of their lustre when placed by the side of this thinker, who grappled with the greatest problems of existence with the mightiest force of conception and reasoning. As a philosopher, he anticipated both the idealism of Berkeley and the positivism of Comte; as a political thinker, he anticipated the noblest truth of our "Declaration of Independence," and twenty-five hundred years ago taught, against the caste system of India, the doctrine of the equality of men; and, in that region of influence, higher than that in which either philosophy or statesmanship works, he founded a religion which is now professed by two-fifths of the human race, and which thus exceeds, in the number of its votaries, that of any other religion in the world. Buddhism has been corrupted by a fantastic mythology, but its essential principle, derived from its founder's disgust of existence, is, that life is not worth living, and that the extinction of life is the highest reward of virtue. To pass, in the next world, through various penal or purifying transmigrations, until you reach the bliss of Nirwana, or mere nothingness and nonentity, that is the Buddhist religion. We have said that it was professed by two-fifths of the human race, but its fundamental principle, that life is not worth living, is believed, if not professed, by a large majority of mankind. Not to speak of the hundreds of wailing books which misanthropic genius has contributed to all modern literatures, not to remind the reader that the Buddhist Byron is the most popular British poet of the century, that person must have been singularly blessed with cheerful companions who has not met followers of Gotama among the nominal believers in Christ. The infection of the doctrine as an interpretation of human experience is so great, that comparatively few have altogether escaped its influence. In basing his religion on this disease of human nature, Gotama showed profounder sagacity than that evinced by any other founder of a false religion; and in the East this disease presented its most despairing phase, for there weariness of life was associated both with the satiety of the rich and the wretchedness of the poor.

But whence comes this disgust of life? We answer, from the comparative absence of life. No man feels it who feels the abounding reality of spiritual existence glowing within him; for rightly sings the poet—

"Whatever crazy sorrow saith,
No life that breathes with human breath
Has ever truly longed for death.

"'Tis life, whereof our nerves are scant,
O life, not death, for which we pant;
More life, and fuller, that we want!"

—*Atlantic Monthly.*

☞ A foreign gentleman declares that he can tell whenever he crosses the border of Massachusetts, because all the women begin to have "views."

SPRING.

FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

Already, while the snow is on the ground,
All things do tell us of the coming spring;
The sun hath changed the circle of his round,
And yesterday I heard a sweet bird sing
From leafless boughs, cold for his gentle wing.
A softer blue doth fill the morning sky,
And south winds often seem to bring the summer nigh.

And strong as run the torrents from the hills
The new life through our veins doth make its way,
And many a thought of mighty action fills
His brain who long hath waited for his day;
To him the voice of Spring doth seem to say,
Now shall thy song rise from the mind's wild strife,
And with the swelling year shall grow and form its life.

RUPERT.

A LEAF IN THE STORM.

[We publish the following story, from *Lippincott's Magazine*, not as taking sides relative to the war in Europe—nor under the belief that the Prussians are doing in France what the French would not do in Germany—but simply to impress more deeply upon our readers the cruelty and horror attendant upon all war.—*Ed. Sat. Eve. Post.*

The Bercean de Dieu was a little village in the valley of the Seine. As a lark drops its nest among the grasses, so a few peasant people had dropped their little farms and cottages amidst the green weeds on the winding river. It was a pretty place, with one steep, stony street, shady with poplars and with elms; quaint houses, about whose thatch a cloud of white and gray pigeons fluttered all day long; a little aged chapel with a conical red roof; and great barns covered with ivy and thick creepers, red and purple, and lichens that were yellow in the sun. All around it there were the broad, flowering meadows, with the sleek cattle of Normandy fattening in them, and the sweet dim forests where the young men and maidens went on every holy day and feast-day in the summer-time to seek for wood-anemones, and lilies of the pools, and the wild campanula, and the fresh dog-rose, and all the boughs and grasses that made their house doors like garden bowers, and seemed to take the cushat's note and the linnet's song into their little temple of God.

The Bercean de Dieu was very old indeed. Men said that the hamlet had been there in the day of the Virgin of Orleans; and a stone cross of the twelfth century still stood by the great pond of water at the bottom of the street under the chestnut tree, where the villagers gathered to gossip at sunset when their work was done. It had no city near it, and no town nearer than four leagues. It was in the green care of a pastoral district, thickly wooded and intersected with orchards. Its produce of wheat, and oats, and cheese, and fruit, and eggs was more than sufficient for its simple prosperity. Its people were hardy, kindly, laborious, happy; living round the little gray chapel in amity and good-fellowship. Nothing troubled it. War and rumors of war, revolutions and counter-revolutions, empires and insurrections, military and political questions—these all were for it things unknown and unheard of—mighty winds that arose and blew and swept the lands around it, but never came near enough to harm it, lying there, as it did, in its loneliness like any lark's nest. Even in the great days of the Revolution it had been quiet. It had had a lord whom it loved in the old castle on the hill at whose feet it nestled: it had never tried to harm him, and it had wept bitterly when he had fallen at Jemappes, and left no heir, and the chateau had crumbled into ivy-hung ruins. The thunder-heats of that dread time had scarcely scorched it. It had seen a few of its best youth march away to the chant of the Marseillaise to fight on the plains of Champagne; and it had been visited by some patriots in *bonnets rouges* and soldiers in blue uniforms, who had given it tricolored cockades and bade it wear them in the holy name of the Republic one and indivisible. But it had not known what these meant, and its harvests had been reaped without the sound of a shot in its fields or any gleam of steel by its innocent hearths; so that the terrors and the tidings of those noble and ghastly years had left no impress on its generations.

Reine Allix indeed, the oldest woman amongst them all, numbering more than ninety years, remembered when she was a child hearing her father and his neighbors talk in low, awestricken tones one bitter wintry night of how a king had been slain to save the people; and she remembered likewise—remembered it well, because it had been her betrothal-night and the sixteenth birthday of her life—how a horseman had flashed through the startled street like a comet, and had called aloud in a voice of fire, "Gloire! gloire! gloire!—Marengo! Marengo! Marengo!" and how the village had dimly understood that something marvelous for France had happened afar off, and how her brothers, and her cousins, and her betrothed, and she with them, had all gone up to the high slope over the river, and had piled up a great pyramid of pine wood and straw and dried mosses, and had set flame to it, till it had glowed in its scarlet triumph all through that wondrous night of the sultry summer of victory.

These and the like memories she would sometimes relate to the children at evening, when they gathered round her begging for a story. Otherwise, no memories of the Revolution or the Empire disturbed the tranquillity of the Bercean; and even she, after she had told them, would add: "I am not sure now what Marengo was. A battle, no doubt, but I am not sure where nor why. But we heard later that little Claudis, my aunt's youngest born, a volunteer not nineteen, died at it. If we had known, we should not have gone up and lit the bonfire."

This woman, who had been born in that time of famine and flame, was the happiest creature in the whole hamlet of the Bercean. "I am old, yes, I am very old," she would say, looking up from her spinning-wheel in her house door, and shading her eyes from the sun, "very old—ninety-two last summer. But when one has a roof over one's head, and a pot of soup always, and a grandson like mine, and when one has lived all one's life in the Bercean de Dieu, then it is well to be so old. Ah, yes, my little ones—yes, though you doubt it, you little birds that have just tried your wings—it is well to be so old. One has time to think, and thank

the good God, which one never seemed to have a minute to do in that work, work, work when one was young."

Reine Allix was a tall and strong woman, very withered, and very bent, and very brown, yet with sweet, dark, flashing eyes that had still light in them, and a face that was still noble, though nearly a century had bronzed it with its harvest suns and blown on it with its winter-winds. She wore always the same garb of homely dark-blue serge, always the same tall white head-gear, always the same pure silver ear-rings that had been at once an heirloom and a nuptial gift. She was always shod in her wooden sabots, and she always walked abroad with a staff of ash. She had been born in the Berceau de Dieu; had lived there, and wedded there; had toiled there all her life, and never left it for a greater distance than a league or a longer time than a day. She loved it with an intense love: the world beyond it was nothing to her: she scarcely believed in it as existing. She could neither read nor write. She told the truth, reared her offspring in honesty, and praised God always—had praised Him when starving in a bitter winter after her husband's death, when there had been no field-work, and she had had five children to feed and clothe; and praised Him now that her sons were all dead before her, and all she had living of her blood was her grandson Bernadou.

Her life had been a hard one. Her parents had been hideously poor. Her marriage had scarcely bettered her condition. She had labored in the fields always, hoeing and weeding and reaping and carrying wood and driving mules, and continually rising with the first streak of the daybreak. She had known fever and famine and all manner of earthly ills. But now in her old age she had peace. Two of her dead sons, who had sought their fortunes in the other hemisphere, had left her a little money, and she had a little cottage and a plot of ground, and a pig, and a small orchard. She was well-to-do, and could leave it all to Bernadou; and for ten years she had been happy, perfectly happy, in the coolness and the sweetness and the old familiar ways and habits of the Berceau.

Bernadou was very good to her. The lad, as she called him, was five-and-twenty years old, tall and straight and clean-limbed, with the blue eyes of the North, and a gentle, frank face. He worked early and late in the plot of ground that gave him his livelihood. He lived with his grandmother, and tended her with a gracious courtesy and veneration that never altered. He was not very wise; he also could neither read nor write; he believed in his priest and his homestead, and loved the ground that he had trodden ever since his first steps from the cradle had been guided by Reine Allix. He had never been drawn for the conscription, because he was the only support of a woman of ninety: he likewise had never been half a dozen kilometres from his birth-place. When he was bidden to vote, and he asked what his vote of assent would pledge him to, they told him, "It will bind you to honor you grandmother so long as she shall live, and to get up with the lark, and to go to mass every Sunday, and to be a loyal son to your country. Nothing more." And thereat he had smiled and straightened his stalwart frame, and gone right willingly to the voting-urn.

He was very stupid in these things; and Reine Allix, though clear-headed and shrewd, was hardly more learned in them than he.

"Look you," she had said to him oftentimes, "in my babyhood there was the old white flag upon the chateau. Well, they pulled that down and put up a red one. That toppled and fell, and there was one of three colors. Then somebody with a knot of white lilies in his hand came one day and set up the old white one afresh; and before the day was done that was down again and the tricolor again up where it is. Now, some I know fretted themselves greatly because of all these changes of the flags, but as for me, I could not see that any one of them mattered: bread was just as dear and sleep was just as sweet whichever of the three was uppermost."

Bernadou, who had never known but the flag of three colors, believed her, as indeed he believed every word that those kindly and resolute old lips ever uttered to him.

He had never been in a city, and only once, on the day of his first communion, in the town four leagues away. He knew nothing more than this simple, cleanly, honest life that he led. With what men did outside his little world of meadow-land and woodland he had no care nor any concern. Once a man had come through the village of the Berceau, a travelling hawker of cheap prints—a man with a wild eye and a restless brain—who told Bernadou that he was a down-trodden slave, a clod, a beast like a mule, who fetched and carried that the rich might fatten—a dolt, an idiot, who cared nothing for the rights of man and the wrongs of the poor. Bernadou had listened with a perplexed face: then with a smile, that had cleared it like sunlight, he had answered in his country dialect, "I do not know of what you speak. Rights? Wrongs? I cannot tell. But I have never owed I son; I have never told a lie; I am strong enough to hold my own with any man that flouts me; and I am content where I am. That is enough for me."

The peddler had called him a poor-spirited beast of burden, but had said so out of reach of his arm, and by night had slunk away from the Berceau de Dieu, and had been no more seen there to vex the quiet contentment of its peaceful and peace-loving ways.

At night, indeed, sometimes, the little wine-shop of the village would be frequented by some half dozen of the peasant proprietors of the place, who talked Communism after their manner, not a very clear one, in excited tones and with the feverish glances of conspirators. But it meant little, and came to less. The weather and the price of wheat were dearer matters to them; and in the end they usually drank their red wine in amity, and went up the village street arm in arm, singing patriotic songs until their angry wives flung open their lattices and thrust their white headgear out into the moonlight, and called to them shrewishly to get to bed and not make fools of themselves in that fashion; which usually silenced and sobered them all instantly; so that the revolutions of the Berceau de Dieu, if not quenched in a winepot, were always smothered in a nightcap, and never by any chance disturbed its repose.

But of these noisy patriots, Bernadou was never one. He had the instinctive conservatism of the French peasant, which is in such direct and tough antagonism with the feverish Socialism of the French artisan. His love was for the soil—a love deep-rooted as the oaks that grew in it. Of Paris he had a dim, vague dread, as of a superb beast continually draining and devouring. Of all forms of government he was alike ignorant. So long as he tilled his little angle of land in peace, so long as the sun ripened his fruits and corn, so long as famine was away from his door and his neighbors dwelt in good-fellowship with him, so long he was happy, and cared not whether he was thus happy under a monarchy, an empire or a republic. This wisdom, which the peddler called apathy and cursed, the young man had imbibed from Nature and the teachings of Reine Allix. "Look at home and mind thy work," she had said always to him. "It is labor enough for a man to keep his own life clean and his own hands honest. Be not thou at any time as they are who are forever telling the good God how He might have made the world on a better plan, while the rats gnaw at their haystacks and the children cry over an empty platter."

And he had taken heed to her words; so that in all the country-side there was not any lad truer, gentler, braver or more patient at labor than was Bernadou; and though some thought him mild even to foolishness, and meek even to stupidity, he was no fool; and he had a certain rough skill at music, and a rare gift at the culture of plants, that made his little home bright within in the winter-time with melody, and in the summer gay without as a king's parterre.

At any rate, Reine Allix and he had been happy together for a quarter of a century under the old gray thatch of the wayside cottage, where it stood at the foot of the village street, with its great sycamores spread above it. Nor were they less happy when in mid-April, in the six-and-twentieth year of his age, Bernadou had come in with a bunch of primroses in his hand, and had bent down to her and saluted her with a respectful tenderness, and said softly and a little shyly, "Gran'mere, would it suit you if I were ever—to marry?"

Reine Allix was silent a minute and more, cherishing the primroses and placing them in a little brown cupful of water. Then she looked at him steadily with her clear, dark eyes: "Who is it, my child?" He was always a child to her, this last-born of the numerous brood that had once dwelt with her under the spreading branches of the sycamores, and had now all perished off the face of the earth, leaving himself and her alone.

Bernadou's eyes met hers frankly: "It is Margot Dal: does that please you, gran'mere, or no?"

"It pleases me well," she said simply. But there was a little quiver about her firm-set mouth, and her aged head was bent over the primroses. She had foreseen it; she was glad of it; and yet for the instant it was a pang to her.

"I am very thankful," said Bernadou, with a flash of joy on his face. He was independent of his grandmother; he could make enough to marry upon by his daily toil, and he had a little store of gold and silver in his bank in the thatch, put by for a rainy day; but he would have no more thought of going against her will than he would have thought of lifting his hand against her. In the primitive homesteads of the Berceau de Dieu filial reverence was still accounted the first of virtues, yet the simplest and the most imperative.

"I will go see Margot this evening," said Reine Allix after a little pause. "She is a good girl, and a brave, and of pure heart and fair name. You have chosen well, my grandson."

Bernadou stooped his tall, fair, curly head, and she laid her hands on him and blessed him.

That evening, as the sun set, Reine Allix kept her word, and went to the young maiden who had allured the eyes and heart of Bernadou. Margot was an orphan: she had not a penny to her dower; she had been brought up on charity, and she dwelt now in the family of the largest landowner of the place, a miller with a numerous offspring, and several head of cattle, and many stretches of pasture and of orchard. Margot worked for a hard master, living indeed as one of the family, but sharply driven all day long at all manner of house-work and field-work. Reine Allix had kept her glance on her, through some instinctive sense of the way that Bernadou's thoughts were turning, and she had seen much to praise, nothing to chide, in the young girl's modest, industrious, cheerful, uncomplaining life. Margot was very pretty, too, with the brown oval face, and the great black, soft eyes, and the beautiful form of the southern blood that had run in the veins of her father, who had been a sailor of Marseilles, whilst her mother had been a native of the Provencal country. Altogether, Reine Allix knew that her beloved one could not have done better or more wisely, if choose at all he must. Some people, indeed, she said to herself as she climbed the street whose sharp-set flints had been trodden by her wooden shoes for ninety years—"Some people would mourn and scold because there is no store of linen, no piece of silver plate, no little round sum in money with the poor child. But what does it matter? We have enough for three. It is wicked indeed for parents to live so that they leave their daughter portionless, but it is no fault of the child's. Let them say what they like, it is a reason the more that she should want a roof over her head and a husband to care for her good."

So she climbed the steep way and the slanting road round the hill, and went in by the door of the mill-house, and found Margot busy in washing some spring lettuces and other green things in a bowl of bright water. Reine Allix, in the fashion of her country and her breeding, was about to confer with the master and mistress ere saying a word to the girl, but there was that in Margot's face and in her timid greeting that lured speech out of her. She looked long and keenly into the child's down-cast countenance, then touched her with a tender smile—

"Petite Margot, the birds told me a little secret to-day. Canst guess what it is? Say?"

Margot colored, and then grew pale. True, Bernadou had never really spoken to her, but still, when one is seventeen, and has danced a few times with the same person, and has plucked the leaves of a daisy away to learn ones fortune, spoken words are not very much wanted.

At sight of her the eyes of the old woman moistened and grew dimmer than age had made them: she smiled still, but the smile had the sweetness of a blessing in it, and no longer the kindly banter of humor.

"You love him, my little one?" she said, in a soft, hushed voice.

"Ah, madame—!" Margot could not say more. She covered her face with her hands, and turned to the wall, and wept with a passion of joy.

Down in the Berceau there were gossips who would have said, with wise shakes of their heads, "Tut, tut! how easy it is to make believe in a little love when one is a serving-maid, and has not a sou, nor a roof, nor a friend in the world, and a comely youth well-to-do is willing to marry us!"

But Reine Allix knew better. She had not lived ninety years in the world not to be able to discern between true feeling and counterfeit. She was touched, and drew the trembling frame of Margot into her arms, and kissed her twice on the closed, blue-veined lids of her black eyes.

"Make him happy, only make him happy," she murmured; "for I am very old, Margot, and he is alone, all alone."

And the child crept to her, sobbing for very rapture that she, friendless, homeless, and penniless, should be thus elected for so fair a fate, and whispered through her tears—

"I will."

Reine Allix spoke in all form to the miller and his wife, and with as much earnestness in her demand as though she had been seeking the hand of rich Yacobe, the tavern-keeper's only daughter. The people assented: they had no pretext to oppose, and Reine Allix wrapped her cloak about her and descended the hill and the street just as the twilight closed in and the little lights began to glimmer through the lattices and the shutters and the green mantle of the boughs, whilst the red fires of the smithy forge glowed brightly in the gloom, and a white horse waited to be shod, a boy in a blue blouse seated on its back and switching away with a branch of budding hazel the first gray gnats of the early year.

"It is well done, it is well done," she said to herself, looking at the low rosy clouds and the pale gold of the waning sky. "A year or two, and I shall be in my grave. I shall leave him easier if I know he has some creature to care for him, and I shall be quiet in my coffin, knowing that his children's children will live on, and on, and on in the Berceau—and sometimes perhaps think a little of me when the nights are long and they sit round the fire."

She went in out of the dewy air, into the little low, square room of her cottage, and went up to Bernadou and laid her hands on his shoulders.

"Be it well with thee, my grandson, and with thy sons' sons after thee," she said, solemnly. "Margot will be thy wife. May thy days and hers be long in thy birth-place!"

A month later they were married. It was then May. The green nest of the Berceau seemed to overflow with the singing of birds and the blossoming of flowers. The corn-lands promised a rare harvest, and the apple orchards were weighed down with their red and white blossoms. The little brown streams in the woods brimmed over in the grass, and the air was full of a sweet, mellow sunlight, a cool, fragrant breeze, a continual music of humming bees and soaring larks, and mule-bells ringing on the roads, and childish laughter echoing from the fields.

In this glad spring-time Bernadou and Margot were wedded, going with their friends one sunny morning up the winding hill-path to the little gray chapel whose walls were hidden in ivy, and whose sorrowful Christ looked down through the open porch across the blue and hazy width of the river. Georges, the baker, whose fiddle made merry melody at all the village dances, played before them tunefully; little children, with their hands full of wood-flowers, ran before them; Georges' old blind poodle smelt his way faithfully by their footsteps; their priests led the way upward with the cross held erect against the light, Reine Allix walked beside them, nearly as firmly as she had trodden the same road seventy years before in her own bridal hour: in the hollow below lay the Berceau de Dieu, with its red gables and its thatched roofs hidden beneath leaves, and its peaceful pastures smiling under the serene blue skies of France.

They were happy—ah Heaven, so happy! and all their little world rejoiced with them.

They came home, and their neighbors entered with them, and ate and drank, and gave them good wishes and gay songs; and the old priest blessed them with a father's tenderness upon their threshold; and the fiddle of Georges sent gladdest dance-music flying through the open casements, across the road, up the hill, far away to the clouds and the river.

At night, when the guests had departed, and all was quite still within and without, Reine Allix sat alone at her window in the roof, thinking of their future and of her past, and watching the stars come out, one by another, above the woods. From her lattice in the eaves she saw straight up the village street; saw the dwellings of her life-long neighbors, the slopes of the rich fields, the gleam of the broad gray water, the whiteness of the crucifix against the darkened skies. She saw it all—all so familiar, with that intimate association only possible to the peasant who has dwelt on one spot from birth to age. In that faint light, in those deep shadows, she could trace all the scene as though the brightness of the noon shone on it: it was all, in its homeliness and simplicity, intensely dear to her. In the playtime of her childhood, in the courtship of her youth, in the joys and woes of her wifehood and widowhood, the bitter pains and sweet ecstasies of her maternity, the hunger and privation of struggling, desolate years, the contentment and serenity of old age—in all these her eyes had rested only on this small, quaint leafy street, with its dwellings close and low, like beehives in a garden, and its pasture-lands and corn-lands, wood-girt and water-fed, stretching as far as the sight could reach. Every inch of its soil, every turn of its paths, was hallowed to her with innumerable memories: all her beloved dead were garnered there where the white Christ watched them: when her time should come, she thought, she would rest with them nothing loth. As she looked, the tears of thanksgiving rolled down her withered cheeks, and she bent her feeble limbs and knelt down in the moonlight, praising God that He had given her to live and die in this cherished home, and beseeching Him for her children that they likewise might dwell in honesty, and with length of days abide beneath that roof.

"God is good," she murmured as she stretched herself to sleep beneath the eaves—"God is good. Maybe, when He takes me to Himself, if I be worthy, He will tell His holy saints to give me a little corner in His kingdom, that He shall fashion for me in the likeness of the Berceau." For it seemed to her that, than the Berceau, heaven itself could hold no sweeter or fairer nook of Paradise.

The year rolled on, and the cottage under the sycamores was but the happier for its new inmate. Bernadou was serious of temper, though so gentle, and the arch, gay humor of his young wife was like perpetual sunlight in the house. Margot, too, was so docile, so eager, so bright, and so imbued with devotional reverence for her husband and his home, that Reine Allix day by day blessed the fate that had brought to her this fatherless and penniless child. Bernadou himself spoke little; words were not in his way, but his blue, frank eyes shone with an unclouded radiance that never changed, and his voice, when he did speak, had a mellow softness in it that made his slightest speech to the two women with him tender as a caress.

"Thou art a happy woman, my sister," said the priest, who was well-nigh as old as herself.

Reine Allix bowed her head and made the sign of the cross: "I am, praise be to God!"

And being happy, she went to the hovel of poor Madelon Dreux, the cobbler's widow, and nursed her and her children through a malignant fever, sitting early and late, and leaving her own peaceful hearth for the desolate but with the delirious ravings and heart-reading moans of the fever-stricken. "How ought one to dare to be happy if one is not of use?" she would say to those who sought to dissuade her from running such peril.

Madelon Dreux and her family recovered, owing to her their lives, and she was happier than before, thinking of them when she sat on the settle before the wood-fire roasting chestnuts and spinning flax on the wheel, and ever and again watching the flame reflected on the fair head of Bernadou or in the dark, smiling eyes of Margot.

Another spring passed and another year went by, and the little home under the sycamores was still no less honest in its labors or bright in its rest. It was one amongst a million of such homes in France, where a sunny temper made mirth with a meal of herbs, and filial love touched to poetry the prose of daily household tasks.

A child was born to Margot in the spring-time with the violets and daisies, and Reine Allix was proud of the fourth generation; and as she caressed the boy's healthy, fair limbs, thought that God was indeed good to her, and that her race would live long in the place of her birth. The child resembled Bernadou, and had his clear, candid eyes. It soon learned to know the voice of "Gran'mere," and would turn from its young mother's bosom to stretch its arms to Reine Allix. It grew fair and strong, and all the ensuing winter passed its hours curled like a door mouse or playing like a puppy at the feet in the chimney corner. Another spring and summer came, and the boy was more than a year old, with curls of gold, and cheeks like apples, and a mouth that always smiled. He could talk a little, and tumble like a young rabbit amongst the flowering grasses. Reine Allix watched him, and her eyes filled. "God is too good," she thought. She feared that she should scarce be so willing to go to her last sleep under the trees on the hillside as she had used to be. She could not help a desire to see this child, this second Bernadou, grow up to youth and manhood: and of this she knew it was wild to dream.

It was ripe midsummer. The fields were all russet and amber with an abundance of corn. The little gardens had seldom yielded so rich a produce. The cattle and the flocks were in excellent health. There had never been a season of greater promise and prosperity for the little traffic that the village and its farms drove in sending milk and sheep and vegetable wealth to that great city which was to it as a dim, wonderful, mystic name without meaning.

One evening in this gracious and golden time the people sat out as usual when the day was done, talking from door to door, the old women knitting or spinning, the younger ones mending their husbands' or brothers' blouses or the little blue shirts of their infants, the children playing with the dogs on the sward that edged the stones of the street, and above all the great calm heavens and the glow of the sun that had set.

Reine Allix, like the others, sat before the door, for once doing nothing, but with folded hands and bended head dreamily taking pleasure in the coolness that had come with evening, and the smell of the limes that were in blossom, and the blithe chatter of Margot with the neighbors. Bernadou was close beside them, watering and weeding those flowers that were at once his pride and his recreation, making the face of his dwelling bright and the air around it full of fragrance.

The little street was quiet in the evening light, only the laughter of the children and the gay gossip of their mothers breaking the pleasant stillness: it had been thus at evening with the Berceau centuries before their time—they thought that it would thus likewise be when centuries should have seen the youngest-born there in his grave.

Suddenly there came along the road between the trees an old man and a mule: it was Mathurin the miller, who had been that day to a little town four leagues off, which was the trade-mart and the corn-exchange of the district. He paused before the cottage of Reine Allix; he was dusty, travel-stained and sad. Margot ceased laughing among her flowers as she saw her old master. None of them knew why, yet the sight of him made the air seem cold and the night seem near.

"There is terrible news," he said, drawing a sheet of printed words from his coat-pocket—"terrible news! We are to go to war."

"War!" The whole village clustered round him. They had heard of war, far-off wars in Africa and Mexico, and some of their sons had been taken off like young wheat mown before its time; but it still remained to them a thing remote, impersonal, inconceivable, with which they had nothing to do, nor ever would have anything.

"Read!" said the old man, stretching out his sheet. The only one there who could do so, Picot the tailor, took it and spelled the news out to their wondering ears. It was the declaration of France against Prussia.

There arose a great wail from the mothers whose sons were conscripts. The rest asked in trembling, "Will it touch us?"

"Us!" echoed Picot the tailor, in contempt. "How should it touch us? Our braves will be in Berlin with another fortnight. The paper says so."

The people were silent: they were not sure what he meant by Berlin, and they were afraid to ask.

"My boy! my boy!" wailed one woman, smiting her breast. Her son was in the army.

"Marengo!" murmured Reine Allix, thinking of that far-off time in her dim youth when the horseman had flown through the dusky street and the bonfire had blazed on the highest hill above the river.

"Bread will be dear," muttered Mathurin the miller, going onward with his foot-weary mule. Bernadou stood silent, with his roses dry and thirsty round him.

"Why art thou sad?" whispered Margot with wistful eyes. "Thou art exempt from war-service, my love?"

Bernadou shook his head. "The poor will suffer somehow," was all he answered.

Yet to him, as to all in the Berceau, the news was not very terrible, because it was so vague and distant—an evil so far off and shapeless.

Monsieur Picot the tailor, who alone could read, ran from house to house, from group to group, breathless, gay and triumphant, telling them all that in two weeks more their brethren would sup in the king's palace at Berlin; and the people believed and laughed and chattered, and, standing outside their doors in the cool nights, thought that some good had come to them and theirs.

Only Reine Allix looked up to the hill above the river and murmured, "When we lit the bonfire there, Claudis lay dead;" and Bernadou, standing musing amongst his roses, said with a smile that was very grave, "Margot, see here! When Picot shouted, 'A Berlin!' he trod on my Gloire de Dijon rose and killed it."

The sultry heats and cloudless nights of the wondrous and awful summer of the year eighteen hundred and seventy passed by, and to the Berceau de Dieu it was a summer of fair promise and noble harvest, and never had the land brought forth in richer profusion for man and beast. Some of the youngest and ablest-bodied laborers were indeed drawn away, to join those swift trains that hurried thousands and tens of thousands to the frontier by the Rhine. But most of the male population were married, and were the fathers of young children, and the village was only moved to a thrill of love and of honest pride to think how its young Louis and Jean and Andre and Valentin, were gone full of high hope and high spirit, to come back, maybe—who could say not?—with epaulettes and ribbons of honor. Why they were gone they knew not very clearly, but their superiors affirmed that they were gone to make greater the greatness of France; and the folk of the Berceau believed it, having in a corner of their quiet hearts a certain vague, dormant yet deep-rooted love, on which was written the name of their country.

News came slowly and seldom to the Berceau. Unless some one of the men rode his mule to the little town, which was but very rarely, or unless some peddler came through the village with a news-sheet or so in his pack or rumors and tidings on his lips, nothing that was done beyond its fields and woods came to it. And the truth of what it heard it had no means of measuring or sifting. It believed what it was told, without questioning; and as it reaped the harvests in the rich hot sun of August, its peasants labored cheerily in the simple and firm belief that mighty things were being done for them and theirs in the far eastern provinces by their great army, and that Louis and Jean and Andre and Valentin and the rest—though indeed no tidings had been heard of them—were safe and well and glorious somewhere, away where the sun rose, in the sacked palaces of the German king. Reine Allix alone of them was serious and sorrowful—she whose memories stretched back over the wide space of nearly a century.

"Why art thou anxious, gran'mere?" they said to her. "There is no cause. Our army is victorious everywhere; and they say our lads will send us all the Prussians' corn and cattle, so that the very beggars will have their stomachs full."

But Reine Allix shook her head, sitting knitting in the sun: "My children, I remember the days of my youth. Our army was victorious then; at least they said so. Well, all I know is that little Claudis and the boys with him never came back; and as for bread, you could not get it for love or money, and the people lay dead of famine out on the public roads."

"But that is so long ago, gran'mere!" they urged.

Reine Allix nodded. "Yes. It is long ago, my dears. But I do not think that things change very much."

They were silent out of respect for her, but amongst themselves they said, "She is very old. Nothing is as it was in her time."

One evening, when the sun was setting red over the reapen fields, two riders on trembling and sinking horses went through the village using whip and spur, and scarcely drew rein as they shouted to the cottagers to know whether they had seen go by a man running for his life. The people replied that they had seen nothing of the kind, and the horsemen pressed on, jamming their spurs into their poor beasts' steaming flanks. "If you see him, catch and hang him," they shouted as they scoured away: "he is a Prussian spy!"

"A Prussian!" the villagers echoed with a stupid stare—"a Prussian in France!"

One of the riders looked over his shoulders for a moment: "You fools! do you not know? We are beaten—beaten everywhere—and the Prussian pigs march on Paris."

The spy was not seen in the Berceau, but the news brought by his pursuers scared sleep from the eyes of every grown man that night in the little village. "It is the accursed Empire!" screamed the patriots of the wineshop. But the rest of the people were too terrified and downstricken to take heed of empires or patriots: they only thought of Louis and Jean and Andre and Valentin; and they collected round Reine Allix, who said to them, "My children, for love of money all our fairest fruits and flowers—yes, even to the best blossoms of our maidenhood—were sent to be bought and sold in Paris. We sinned therein, and this is the will of God."

This was all for a time that they heard. It was a place lowly and obscure enough to be left in peace. The law pounced down on it once or twice and carried off a few more of its men for army-service, and arms were sent to it from its neighboring town, and an old soldier of the First Empire tried to instruct its remaining sons in their use. But he had no apt pupil except Bernadou, who soon learned to handle a musket with skill and with precision, and who carried his straight form gallantly and well, though his words were seldom heard and his eyes were always sad.

"You will not be called till the last, Bernadou," said the old soldier: "you are married, and maintain your granddame and wife and child. But a strong, muscular, well-built youth like you should not wait to be called—you should volunteer to serve France."

"I will serve France when my time comes," said Bernadou, simply, in answer. But he would not leave his fields barren, and his orchard uncared for, and his wife to sicken and starve, and his grandmother to perish alone in her ninety-third year. They jeered and flouted and upbraided him, those patriots who screamed against the fallen Empire in the wine-shop, but he looked them

straight in the eyes, and held his peace, and did his daily work.

"If he be called, he will not be found wanting," said Reine Allix, who knew him better than did even the young wife whom he loved.

Bernadou clung to his home with a dogged devotion. He would not go from it to fight unless compelled, but for it he would have fought like a lion. His love for his country was only an indefinite, shadowy existence that was not clear to him; he could not save a land that he had never seen, a capital that was only to him as an empty name; nor could he comprehend the danger that his nation ran, nor could he desire to go forth and spend his life-blood in defence of things unknown to him. He was only a peasant, and he could not read nor greatly understand. But affection for his birth-place was a passion with him—mute indeed, but deep-seated as an oak. For his birth-place he would have struggled as a man can only struggle when supreme love as well as duty nerves his arm. Neither he nor Reine Allix could see that a man's duty might lie from home, but in that home both were alike ready to dare anything and to suffer everything. It was a narrow form of patriotism, yet it had nobleness, endurance and patience in it; in song it has been oftentimes deified as heroism, but in modern warfare it is punished as the blackest crime.

So Bernadou tarried in his cottage till he should be called, keeping watch by night over the safety of his village, and by day doing all he could to aid the deserted wives and mothers of the place by the tilling of their ground for them and the tending of such poor cattle as were left in their desolate fields. He and Margot and Reine Allix, between them, fed many mouths that would otherwise have been closed in death by famine, and denied themselves all except the barest and most meagre subsistence, that they might give away the little they possessed.

And all this while the war went on, but seemed far from them, so seldom did any tidings of it pierce the seclusion in which they dwelt. By-and-by, as the autumn went on, they learned a little more. Fugitives coming to the smithy for a horse's shoe; women fleeing to their old village homes from their base, gay life in the city; mandates from the government of defence sent to every hamlet in the country; stray newssheets brought in by carriers or hawkers and hucksters—all these by degrees told them of the peril of their country—vaguely indeed, and seldom truthfully, but so that by mutilated rumors they came at last to know the awful facts of the fate of Sedan, the fall of the Empire, the siege of Paris. It did not alter their daily lives: it was still too far off and too unpalpable. But a foreboding, a dread, an unspeakable woe settled down on them. Already their lands and cattle had been harassed to yield provision for the army and large towns; already their best horses had been taken for the siege-trains and the forage-wagons; already their ploughshares were perforce idle, and their children cried because of the scarcity of nourishment; already the iron of war had entered into their souls.

The little street at evening was mournful and very silent; the few who talked spoke in whispers, lest a spy should hear them, and the young ones had no strength to play: they wanted food.

"It is as it was in my youth," said Reine Allix, eating her piece of black bread and putting aside the better food prepared for her, that she might save it, unseen, for "the child."

It was horrible to her and to all of them to live in that continual terror of an unknown foe—that perpetual expectation of some ghastly, shapeless misery. They were quiet—so quiet!—but by all they heard they knew that any night, as they went to their beds, the thunder of cannon might awaken them; any morning, as they looked on their beloved fields, they knew that ere sunset the flames of war might have devoured them. They knew so little, too: all they were told was so indefinite and garbled that sometimes they thought the whole was some horrid dream—thought so, at least, until they looked at their empty stables, their untilled land, their children who cried from hunger, their mothers who wept for the conscripts.

But as yet it was not so very much worse than it had been in times of bad harvest and of dire distress; and the storm which raged over the land had as yet spared this little green nest amongst the woods on the Seine.

November came. "It is a cold night, Bernadou: put on more wood," said Reine Allix. Fuel at the least was plentiful in that district, and Bernadou obeyed.

He sat at the table, working at a new churn for his wife: he had some skill at turnery and at invention in such matters. The child slept soundly in its cradle by the hearth, smiling while it dreamed. Margot spun at her wheel. Reine Allix sat by the fire, seldom lifting her head from her long knitting-needles, except to cast a look on her grandson or at the sleeping child. The little wooden shutter of the house was closed. Some winter roses bloomed in a pot beneath the little crucifix. Bernadou's flute lay on a shelf: he had not had heart enough to play it since the news of the war had come.

Suddenly a great sobbing cry rose without—the cry of many voices, all raised in woe together. Bernadou rose, took his musket in his hand, undid his door and looked out. All the people were turned out into the street, and the women, loudly lamenting, beat their breasts and strained their children to their bosoms. There was a sullen red light in the sky to the eastward, and on the wind a low, hollow roar stole to them.

"What is it?" he asked.

"The Prussians are on us!" answered twenty voices in one accord. "That red glare is the town burning."

Then they were all still—a stillness that was more horrible than their lamentations.

Reine Allix came and stood by her grandson. "If we must die, let us die *here*," she said, in a voice that was low and soft and grave.

He took her hand and kissed it. She was content with his answer.

Margot stole forth, too, and crouched behind them, holding her child to her breast. "What can they do to us?" she asked, trembling, with the rich colors of her face blanched white.

Bernadou smiled on her: "I do not know, my dear. I think even they can hardly bring death upon women and children."

"They can, and they will," said a voice from the crowd.

None answered. The street was very quiet in the darkness. Far away in the east the red glare glowed. On the wind there was still that faint, distant ravening roar, like the roar of famished wolves: it was the roar of fire and of war.

In the silence Reine Allix spoke: "God is good. Shall we not trust in Him?"

With one great choking sob the people answered: their hearts were breaking. All night long they watched in the street—they who had done no more to bring this curse upon them than the flower-roots that slept beneath the snow. They dared not go to their beds: they knew not when the enemy might be upon them. They dared not flee: even in their own woods the foe might lurk for them. One man indeed did cry aloud: "Shall we stay here in our houses to be smoked out like bees from their hives? Let us fly!"

But the calm, firm voice of Reine Allix rebuked him: "Let who will run like a hare from the hounds. For me and mine, we abide by our homestead."

And they were ashamed to be outdone by a woman, and a woman ninety years old, and no man spoke any more of flight. All the night long they watched in the cold and the wind, the children shivering beneath their mothers' skirts, the men sullenly watching the light of the flames in the dark, starless sky. All night long they were left alone, though far off they heard the dropping shots of scattered firing, and in the leafless woods around them the swift flight of woodland beasts startled from their sleep, and the hurrying feet of sheep terrified from their folds in the outlying fields.

The day-break came, gray, cheerless, very cold. A dense fog, white and raw, hung over the river: in the east, where the sun, they knew, was rising, they could only see the livid light of the still towering flames and pillars of black smoke against the leaden clouds.

"We will let them come and go in peace if they will," murmured old Mathurin. "What can we do? We have no arms—no powder, hardly—no soldiers—no defence."

Bernadou said nothing, but he straightened his tall limbs and in his grave blue eyes a light gleamed.

Reine Allix looked at him as she sat in the doorway of her house. "Thy hands are honest, thy heart pure, thy conscience clear. Be not afraid to die if need there be," she said to him.

He looked down and smiled on her. Margot clung to him in a passion of weeping. He clasped her close and kissed her softly, but the woman who read his heart was the woman who had held him at his birth.

By degrees the women crept timidly back into their houses, hiding their eyes, so that they should not see that horrid light against the sky, whilst the starving children clung to their breasts or to their skirts, wailing aloud in terror. The few men there were left, for the most part of them very old or else mere striplings, gathered together in a hurried council. Old Mathurin the miller and the patriots of the wine-shop were agreed that there could be no resistance, whatever might befall them—that it would be best to hide such weapons as they had and any provisions that still remained to them, and yield up themselves and their homes with humble grace to the dire foe. "If we do otherwise," they said, "the soldiers will surely slay us, and what can a miserable little hamlet like this achieve against cannon and steel and fire?"

Bernadou alone raised his voice in opposition. His eye kindled, his cheek flushed, his words for once sprang from his lips like fire. "What!" he said to them, "shall we yield up our homes and our wives and our infants without a single blow? Shall we be so vile as to truckle to the enemies of France, and show that we can fear them? It were a shame, a foul shame: we were not worthy of the name of men. Let us prove to them that there are people in France who are not afraid to die. Let us hold our own so long as we can. Our muskets are good, our walls strong, our woods in this weather morasses that will suck in and swallow them if only we have tact to drive them there. Let us do what we can. The camp of the francs-tireurs is but three leagues from us. They will be certain to come to our aid. At any rate, let us die bravely. We can do little—that may be. But if every man in France does that little that he can, that little will be great enough to drive the invaders off the soil."

Mathurin and the others screamed at him and hooted. "You are a fool!" they shouted. "You will be the undoing of us all. Do you not know that one shot fired—nay, only one musket found—and the enemy puts a torch to the whole place?"

"I know," said Bernadou, with a dark radiance in his azure eyes. "But then it is a choice between disgrace and the flames: let us only take heed to be clear of the first—the last must rage as God wills."

But they screamed and mouthed and hissed at him: "Oh yes! fine talk, fine talk! See your own roof in flames if you will: you shall not ruin ours. Do what you will with your own neck. Keep it erect or hang by by it, as you choose. But you have no right to give your neighbors over to death, whether they will or no."

He strove, he pleaded, he conjured, he struggled with them half the night, with the salt tears running down his cheeks, and all his gentle blood burning with righteous wrath and loathing shame, stirred for the first time in all his life to a rude, simple, passionate eloquence. But they were not persuaded. Their few gold-pieces hidden in the rafters, their few feeble sheep starving in the folds, their own miserable lives, all hungry, woe-begone and spent in daily terrors—these were still dear to them, and they would not imperil them. They called him a madman; they denounced him as one who would be their murderer; they threw themselves on him and demanded his musket to bury it with the rest under the altar in the old chapel on the hill.

Bernadou's eyes flashed fire; his breast heaved; his nerves quivered; he shook them off and strode a step forward. "As you live," he murmured, "I have a mind to fire on you, rather than let you live to shame yourselves and me!"

Reine Allix, who stood by him silent all the while, laid her hand on his shoulder. "My boy," she said in his ear, "you are right, and they wrong. Yet let not dissension between brethren open the door for the enemy to enter thereby into your homes. Do what you will with your own life, Bernadou—it is yours—but leave them to do as they will with theirs. You cannot make sheep into lions, and let not the first blood shed here be a brother's."

Bernadou's head dropped on his breast. "Do as you will," he muttered to his neighbors. They took his musket from him, and in the darkness of the night stole silently up the wooded chapel-hill and buried it, with all their other arms, under the altar where the white Christ hung. "We are safe now," said Mathurin the miller to the patriots of the tavern. "Had that madman had his way, he had destroyed us all."

Reine Allix softly led her grandson across his own threshold, and drew his head down to hers and kissed him between the eyes. "You did what you could, Bernadou," she said to him, "let the rest come as it will."

Then she turned from him, and flung her cloak over her head and sank down, weeping bitterly, for she had lived through ninety-three years only to see this agony at the last.

Bernadou, now that all means of defence was gone from him, and the only thing left to him to deal with was his own life, had become quiet and silent and passionless, as was his habit. He would have fought like a mastiff for his home, but this they had forbidden him to do, and he was passive and without hope. He shut his door, and sat down with his hand in that of Reine Allix and his arm around his wife. "There is nothing to do but to wait," he said sadly. The day seemed very long in coming.

The firing ceased for awhile: then its roll commenced afresh, and grew nearer to the village. Then again all was still.

At noon a shepherd staggered into the place, pale, bleeding, bruised, covered with mire. The Prussians, he told them, had forced him to be their guide, had knotted him tight to a trooper's saddle, and had dragged him with them until he was half dead with fatigue and pain. At night he had broken from them and had fled: they were close at hand, he said, and had burned the town from end to end because a man had fired at them from a house-top. That was all he knew. Bernadou, who had gone out to hear his news, returned into the house and sat down and hid his face within his hands. "If I resist you are all lost," he muttered. "And yet to yield like a cur!" It was a piteous question, whether to follow the instinct in him and see his birth-place in flames and his family slaughtered for his act, or to crush out the manhood in him and live, loathing himself as a coward for evermore?

Reine Allix looked at him, and laid her hand on his bowed head, and her voice was strong and tender as music: "Fret not thyself, my beloved. When the moment comes, then do as thine own heart and the whisper of God in it bid thee."

A great sob answered her: it was the first since his earliest infancy that she had ever heard from Bernadou.

It grew dark. The autumn day died. The sullen clouds dropped scattered rain. The red leaves were blown in millions by the wind. The little houses on either side the road were dark, for the dwellers in them dared not show any light that might be a star to allure to them the footsteps of their foes. Bernadou sat with his arms on the table, and his head resting on them. Margot nursed her son: Reine Allix prayed.

Suddenly in the street without there was the sound of many feet of horses and of men, the shouting of angry voices, the splashing of quick steps in the watery ways, the screams of women, the flash of steel through the gloom. Bernadou sprang to his feet, his face pale, his blue eyes dark as night. "They are come!" he said under his breath. It was not fear that he felt, nor horror: it was rather a passion of love for his birth-place and his nation—a passion of longing to struggle and to die for both. And he had no weapon!

He drew his house door open with a steady hand, and stood on his own threshold and faced these, his enemies. The street was full of them—some mounted, some on foot: crowds of them swarmed in the woods and on the roads. They had settled on the village as vultures on a dead lamb's body. It was a little, lowly place: it might well have been left in peace. It had no more share in the war than a child still unborn, but it came in the victors' way, and their mailed heel crushed it as they passed. They had heard that arms were hidden and francs-tireurs sheltered there, and they had swooped down on it and held it hard and fast. Some were told off to search the chapel; some to ransack the dwellings; some to seize such food and bring such cattle as there might be left; some to seek out the devious paths that crossed and recrossed the fields; and yet there still remained in the little street hundreds of armed men, force enough to awe a citadel or storm a breach.

The people did not attempt to resist. They stood passive, dry-eyed in their misery, looking on whilst the little treasures of their household lives were swept away for ever, and ignorant what fate by fire or iron might be their portion ere the night was done. They saw the corn that was their winter store to save their offspring from famine poured out like ditch-water. They saw oats and wheat flung down to be trodden into a slough of mud and filth. They saw the walnut presses in their kitchens broken open, and their old heirlooms of silver, centuries old, borne away as booty. They saw the oak cupboards in their wives' bed-chambers ransacked, and the homespun linen and the quaint bits of plate that had formed their nuptial dowers cast aside in derision or trampled into a battered heap. They saw the pet lamb of their infants, the silver earrings of their brides, the brave tankards they had drunk their marriage wine in, the tame bird that flew to their whistle, all seized for food or seized for spoil. They saw all this, and had to stand by with mute tongues and passive hands, lest any glance of wrath or gesture of revenge should bring the leaden bullet in their children's throats or the yellow flame amidst their homesteads. Greater agony the world cannot hold.

Under the porch of the cottage, by the sycamores, one group stood and looked, silent and very still—Bernadou, erect, pale, calm, with a fierce scorn burning in his eyes; Margot, quiet, because he wished her so, holding to her the rosy and golden beauty of her son; Reine Allix, with a patient horror on her face, her figure drawn to its full height, and her hands holding to her breast the crucifix. They stood thus, waiting they knew not what, only resolute to show no cowardice and meet no shame.

Behind them was the dull, waning glow of the wood-fire on the hearth which had been the centre of all their hopes and joys; before them the dim, dark country, and the woe-stricken faces of their neighbors, and the moving soldiery with their torches, and the quivering forms of the half-dying horses.

Suddenly a voice arose from the armed mass: "Bring me the peasant hither."

Bernadou was seized by several hands and forced and dragged from his door out to the place where the leader of the Uhlans sat on a white charger that shook and snorted blood in its exhaustion. Bernadou cast off the alien grasp that held him, and stood erect before his foes. He was no longer pale, and his eyes were clear and steadfast.

"You look less a fool than the rest," said the Prussian commander. "You know this country well?"

"Well!" The country in whose fields and woodlands he had wandered from his infancy, and whose every meadow-path and wayside tree and flower-sown brook he knew by heart as a lover knows the lines of his mistress's face.

"You have arms here?" pursued the German.

"We had."

"What have you done with them?"

"If I had had my way, you would not need ask. You would have felt them."

The Prussian looked at him keenly, doing homage to the boldness of the answer. "Will you confess where they are?"

"No."

"You know the penalty for concealment of arms is death?"

"You have made it so."

"We have, and Prussian will is French law. You are a bold man: you merit death. But still, you know the country well?"

Bernadou smiled, as a mother might smile were any foolish enough to ask her if she remembered the look her dead child's face had worn.

"If you know it well," pursued the Prussian, "I will give you a chance. Lay hold of my stirrup-leather and be lashed to it, and show me straight as the crow flies to where the weapons are hidden. If you do, I will leave you your life. If you do not—"

"If I do not?"

"You will be shot."

Bernadou was silent: his eyes glanced through the mass of soldiers to the little cottage under the trees opposite: the two there were straining to behold him, but the soldiers pushed them back, so that in the flare of the torches they could not see, nor in the tumult hear. He thanked God for it.

"Your choice?" asked the Uhlan impatiently, after a moment's pause.

Bernadou's lips were white, but they did not tremble as he answered, "I am no traitor." And his eyes as he spoke went softly to the little porch where the light glowed from that hearth beside which he would never again sit with the creatures he loved around him.

The German looked at him: "Is that a boast or a fact?"

"I am no traitor," Bernadou answered simply once more.

The Prussian gave a sign to his troopers. There was the sharp report of a double shot, and Bernadou fell dead. One bullet had pierced his brain, the other was bedded in his lungs. The soldiers kicked aside the warm and quivering body. It was only a peasant killed!

With a shriek that rose above the roar of the wind, and cut like steel to every human heart that beat there, Reine Allix forced her way through the throng, and fell on her knees beside him, and caught him in her arms, and laid his head upon her breast, where he had used to sleep his softest sleep in infancy and childhood. "It is God's will, it is God's will!" she muttered: and then she laughed a laugh so terrible that the blood of the boldest there ran cold.

Margot followed her and looked, and stood dry-eyed and silent; then flung herself and the child she carried in her arms beneath the hoof of the white charger. "End your work!" she shrieked to them. "You have killed him—kill us. Have you not mercy enough for that?"

The horse, terrified and snorting blood, plunged and trampled the ground: his fore foot struck the child's golden head and stamped its face out of all human likeness. Some peasants pulled Margot from the lashing hoofs: she was quite dead, though neither wound nor bruise was on her.

Reine Allix neither looked nor paused. With all her strength she had begun to drag the body of Bernadou across the threshold of his house. "He shall lie at home, he shall lie at home," she muttered. She would not believe that already he was dead. With all the force of her earliest womanhood she lifted him, and half drew half bore him into the home that he had loved, and laid him down upon the hearth, and knelt by him, caressing him as though he were once more a child, and saying softly, "Hush!" for her mind was gone, and she fancied that he only slept.

Without, the tumult of the soldiery increased: they found the arms hidden under the altar on the hill; they seized five peasants to slay them for the dire offence. The men struggled, and would not go as sheep to the shambles. They were shot down in the street before the eyes of their children. Then the order was given to fire the place in punishment, and leave it to its fate.

The torches were flung with a laugh on the dry thatched roofs—brands snatched from the house-fires on the hearths were tossed amongst the dwelling-houses and the barns. The straw and timber flared alight like tow.

An old man, her nearest neighbor, rushed to the cottage of Reine Allix and seized her by the arm, "They fire the Bercean," he screamed. "Quick! quick! or you will be burned alive!"

Reine Allix looked up with a smile "Be quiet! Do you not see? He sleeps."

The old man shook her, implored her, strove to drag her away—in desperation pointed to the roof above, which was already in flames.

Reine Allix looked: at that sight her mind cleared and regained consciousness: she remembered all, she understood all: she knew that he was dead. "Go in peace and save yourself," she said in the old sweet, strong tone of an earlier day. "As for me, I am very old. I and my dead will stay together at home."

The man fled, and left her to her choice.

The great curled flames and the livid vapors closed around her: she never moved. The death was fierce but swift, and even in death she and the one whom she had loved and reared were not divided. The end soon came. From hill to hill the Bercean de Dieu broke into flames. The village was a lake of fire, into which the statue of the Christ, burning and reeling, fell. Some few peasants, with their wives and children, fled to the woods, and there escaped one torture to perish more slowly of cold and famine. All other things perished. The rapid stream of the flame licked up all there was in its path. The bare trees raised their leafless branches on fire at a thousand points. The stores of corn and fruit were lapped by millions of crimson tongues. The pigeons flew screaming from their roosts and sank into the smoke. The dogs were suffocated on the thresholds they had guarded all their lives. The calf was stifled in the byre. The sheep ran bleating with the wool burning on their living bodies. The little caged birds fluttered helpless, and then dropped, scorched to cinders. The aged and the sick were stifled in their beds. All things perished.

The Bercean de Dieu was as one vast furnace, in which every living creature was caught and consumed and changed to ashes. The tide of war has rolled on and left it a blackened waste, a smoking ruin, wherein not so much as a mouse may creep or a bird may nestle. It is gone, and its place can know it never more.

Never more. But who is there to care? It was but as a leaf which the great storm swept away as it passed. OUIDA.

Of the wisdom of the ancient Egyptians a knowledge of dentistry formed a part, and mummies have been found with wooden and ivory teeth; some of them even fixed, in modern fashion, on gold plates; and with hollow teeth stopped with gold—so true is it that there is nothing new under the sun. The classic writers also speak of artificial teeth as being well known both in ancient Greece and Rome. A century and a half ago, as appears from advertisements in old newspapers, goldsmiths did the work of dentists in making and cleaning artificial teeth. A few months since, while some excavations were being made at Murcia, in Spain, the workmen came upon human bones; in one of the jaws of which was a silver tooth.

☞ What wonderful results are sometimes announced to us, and received without surprise—indeed, as if they were matters of course! Mr. Samuel B. Ruggles, for instance, at a meeting of the Chamber of Commerce a few days since, announced, as chairman of Standing Committee No. 3, that the telegraph had been completed to Singapore, thus making the communication to Canton in one week.

☞ Charles Francis Adams, our late able Minister to England, is a man of strikingly small stature, being not over five feet in height, and weighing about one hundred pounds.

☞ A fool in a high station is like a man on the top of a high mountain—everything appears small to him, and he appears small to everybody.

☞ Another notice to publishers—More disappointment arising out of the title of a book! An enterprising farmer, always on the watch for information, indeed an enthusiast in his profession, ordered "Rain upon the Mown Grass," and found it was—sermons.

☞ Holt county, Mo., advertises for a school teacher with plenty of muscle.

☞ Jenny Lind is almost fifty years old.

☞ To annihilate a swell salesman in a first-class furniture house, ask him—"Is this the auction store?"

☞ Can a lover be called a suitor, when he don't suit her?

☞ Saturday morning, while the Legislative committees were walking through the wards of the Lunatic Hospital, one of the female patients, after looking curiously at the group, said, "Well, I declare! if here ain't the animals from Noah's ark.

DETERMINED beforehand, we gravely pretend
To ask the opinion and thoughts of a friend;
Should his differ from ours on any pretence,
We pity his want of both judgment and sense;
But if he falls into and flatters our plan,
Why, really we think him a sensible man.

☞ We saw a sad-looking white horse yesterday on which some one had stencilled. "Oats wanted. Inquire within."

☞ The father of the cereals—"pop" corn.

☞ A Duluth editor, who has strayed as far eastward as New York, writes in raptures to his paper of the people of that remote region. He says: "How different the folks do act! How green they look! What an air of primitive innocence there is about them! How pleased they seem to be! They never heard of Duluth!"

☞ In a pool across the road in the County of Tipperary, Ireland, is stuck up a pole, having affixed to it a board with this inscription: "Take notice, that when the water is over the board the road is impassable."

☞ Mlle. Schneider, the original Grand Duchesse, for whom many of Offenbach's burlesques were composed, and the queen of the *opera bouffe*, by whom young Paris and young London but a short time since were enraptured, is dead.

☞ The character of the soul is determined by the character of its God.

☞ The generous contribution of the Rothschilds to the poor of Paris is followed by the princely offer to advance the entire amount of the war indemnity levied by the Germans upon that municipality.

☞ At Cincinnati, Judge Cox has decided in the case of a man who falsely informed a local reporter that a neighbor of his had committed suicide, that, the item being published, the informer, not the newspaper, had to pay the damages.

☞ The "Friends" in some places are eschewing the old-fashioned "meeting-houses," with their plain board sittings. In Baltimore the Friends have erected a building which is a model of neatness and taste, of pressed brick, with brown stone trimmings, while the interior has walnut pews with cushions and carpets.

THE MARKETS.

FLOUR—7000 barrels extra Western family sold at prices ranging from $5.25@5.75 for superfine; $5.75@6.50 for extra; $6.50@7 for Penna extra family; $6.50@7.50 for Northwest family; $6.75@7.75 for Ohio and Indiana family, and $8@8.50 ₩ bbl for fancy brands. Rye Flour sold at $6 ₩ bbl.

GRAIN—Wheat—20,000 bus sold at $1.55@1.60 for Indiana red; $1.58@1.60 for Ohio red; $1.62@1.65 for Penna red; $1.60@1.65 for Western amber, and $1.75@1.85 ₩ bus for white. Rye—Sales of 2500 bus at $1.08@1.10. Corn—Sales of 50,000 bus at 77@78c for mixed, and 78@80c ₩ bus for yellow. Oats—Sales of 18,000 bus at 42@45c ₩ bus. Barley—Sales of 4000 bus New York at 95c.

PROVISIONS—Sales of new mess Pork at $22.50@23; clear at $24, and extra prime at $18. Mess Beef at $20@21 ₩ bbl for city packed extra mess. Beef Hams may be quoted at $30@31 ₩ bbl. Bacon—Sales of sugar-cured city smoked hams at 16@17c; Excelsior hams at 17c; sides at 12½@13c, and shoulders 10½c. Green Meats—Sales of pickled hams at 14@14½c; sides at 11@11½c, and shoulders, in salt, at 8½c. Lard—Sales of 400 bbls and tierces at 13@13½c for steam and kettle rendered. Butter—Sales of inferior packed at 13@17c; Penna store packed at 20@24c, and roll at 27@30c ₩ lb. Eggs sell at 29@31c ₩ dozen. Cheese sells at 15½@16½c ₩ lb.

COTTON—500 bales of middlings sold at 15@15¼c ₩ lb for upland, and 15@@16c ₩ lb for New Orleans.

BARK—30 hhds of No 1 Quercitron sold at $30 ₩ ton. Tanners' Bark ranges from $16@22 ₩ cord for chestnut and Spanish oak.

BEESWAX sells at 31@32c ₩ lb for yellow.

FRUIT—Dried Apples and Peaches—Sales at 4@6c for Apples, and 12@13c ₩ lb for half Peaches. Green Apples sell at $5@6 ₩ bbl. Cranberries sell at $10@12 ₩ bbl.

HAY—Prime Timothy Hay ₩ 100 lbs, $1,20@1,25; mixed do, $1,05@1,10; Straw, 1,15@1,20.

HOPS—Sales at 5@12c.

IRON—Pig Iron—No 1 at $32,50; No 2 sold at $30. Bar Iron sells at $74@75 ₩ ton. Scotch Pig sells at $33 ₩ ton.

SEEDS—Clover seed—700 bus sold, at 10½@11½c ₩ lb. Timothy at $6@6,25. Flaxseed at $2@2,10.

PHILADELPHIA CATTLE MARKETS.

The supply of Beef Cattle during the past week amounted to about 1900 head. The prices realized from 4@9 cts ₩ lb. 200 Cows brought from $40 to 70 ₩ head. Sheep—13,000 head were disposed of at from 5@6½c ₩ lb. 5000 Hogs sold at from $10 to $12 ₩ 100 lbs.

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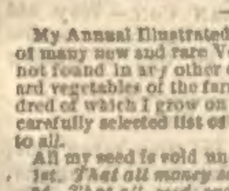

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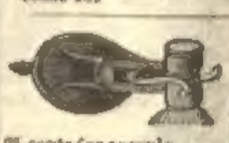

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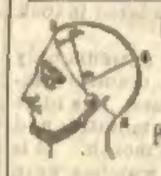

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For Wigs, Inches.	*Toupee and Scalps, Inches.*
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" 3.—From ear to ear over the top.	" 3.—Over the crown of the head.
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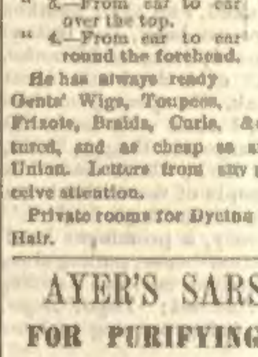

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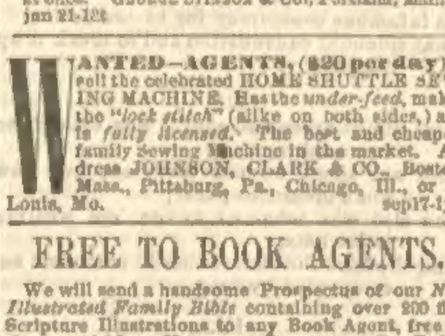

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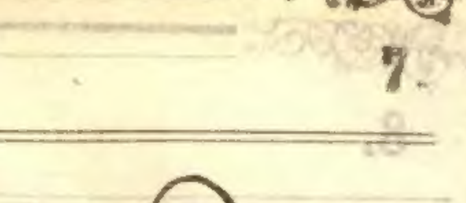

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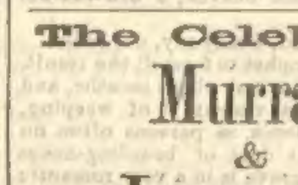

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WIT AND HUMOR.

A Thrilling Legend.

BY MOSE SKINNER.

You may remember I wrote you, a short time ago, about the sudden death of Deacon Jones. Well, the Deacon's estate was sold at auction last Friday. There was always something mysterious about that house, and especially regarding one room, which hasn't been unlocked for seven years. There is a thrilling legend connected with that room, which is told very much as follows:

The room is called Maria Ann's *boudoir*. Maria Ann was the Deacon's daughter. She was one of those sensitive, delicately-organized creatures who love once, and only once. In a town as small as this, a delicately-organized creature doesn't get a chance to love but once, any way, and sometimes not that, for the marriageable young men are very scarce, and pretty well up to snuff besides. You don't catch them at church fairs and evening meetings, and places of that kind, where young women congregate to pounce upon unwary youths. These match factories are pretty poorly patronized in Slunkville, I can tell you. Our young men may be green, but they ain't idiotic. They don't propose to put their nose to the matrimonial grindstone just because some young woman is willing to turn the crank.

But I digress.

The cruel Fates willed it that Maria Ann should fall hopelessly in love. The object upon whom she bestowed this wealth of affection was Joel Slobbs, the butcher's young man. Ah! how her tender, loving nature clung to that Slobbs! Who does not remember her graceful, swan-like figure, and the coquettish manner in which she would trip into the butcher's, and ask Joel, in her artless way, if he'd got any good tripe to-day?

But, alas! Joel did not reciprocate her feelings. He had already bestowed the priceless boon of his young love on Sarah Jane Sloper, hired girl at Parson Slowboy's. And so while Maria Ann sighed for Joel, Joel sighed for Sarah Jane and ten dollars a week, with which sum he calculated he could keep house, and have three stuffed chairs in the parlor.

When the dark truth forced itself slowly upon Maria Ann that Joel was indeed utterly lost to her, she locked herself in her *boudoir*, and appeared wholly cast down. With a breaking heart and a little glue she put Joel's tintype into an oyster-shell frame, and would gaze sadly upon it for hours. This was sad, very sad, for her family and friends, but the worst was yet to come. She one day announced a firm determination to eat nothing but sausages. Why? Because all the sausages in that town were made by Joel. What an ardent, soul-consuming love was this!

"I cannot marry Joel," she would say, sadly, "but, thank heaven, I can eat his sausages."

And she persisted, I may say, doggedly.

It needed no prophet to foretell the result. She kept it up for about three months, and then, one day, in a violent fit of weeping, she fell all to pieces, as persons often do who eat a great deal of boarding-house mince-pie. Her grave is in a very romantic spot called "The Lovers' Glen," and folks say that if any young woman who is engaged to a dark-complexioned young man passes by there after dark, when the wind is east, her marriage will prove very unhappy.

This, then, is the legend of Maria Ann's *boudoir*, at once weird and touching.

The auction passed off very pleasantly, and the articles brought good prices. I enumerate a few. A cracked vase, with a faded bouquet, sold to Seraphina Goodspeed for ninety cents; a writing desk, with lock of hair, two and threepence, Charity Baxter; worsted reticule, embroidered with bleeding heart, ten and sixpence, Ruth Muggett; pair of long black stockings, heels darned with blue, five and threepence, Huldah Baxter; piece of soiled pink ribbon, evidently the remains of a man's necktie, seven and sixpence, Joanna Sparks; a coal-hod, with which Maria Ann floored her paternal head when he proposed a change of diet, two and threepence, Mrs. Mose Skinner.

Notwithstanding the calumnies cast upon it by the Byetown Gazette, which didn't get any advertising, the whole affair was a grand success.—*True Flag.*

A Cook of the Period.

We copy as follows from a communication in the Boston Advertiser:—

An incident so amusing, and withal so instructive, occurred to a friend a few days since, that I have begged her permission to transcribe it for the benefit of the public generally, and particularly for such persons as are obliged to employ ladies to assist them in their domestic affairs. My friend, whom we will call Mrs. Wilson, had applied at one of those most forlorn of all places, an intelligence office, and patiently awaited "returns." A ring at the door announced the first arrival (not at the lower door—certainly not!) and my friend walked into her parlor and beheld the "lady," looking for all the world like a monk in a cowl and gown, enveloped, as she was, from top to toe in a black waterproof. There and then the following conversation took place:

Mrs. Wilson (daringly taking the initiative.)—"Have you been accustomed to cooking?"

The Lady.—"Yes" (patronizingly.) "How many have you in your family?"

"Mrs. W.—"Eight."

"The Lady.—"How many children have you?"

Mrs. W.—(Somewhat surprised.) "Three."

The Lady.—"How old is your youngest child?"

Mrs. W.—(Annoyed but somewhat awed.) "Eleven years."

The Lady.—"How many girls do you keep?"

Mrs. W.—(Deprecatingly.) "Two and a seamstress."

The Lady.—"How old is your second girl?"

Mrs. W.—(Apologetically.) "I really do not know."

The Lady.—"Can't you form some idea of her age?"

Mrs. W.—"None."

The Lady.—"What conveniences have you in your kitchen?"

Mrs. W.—"All that are necessary." (She might have added that any want should be at once supplied, but by this time she became so confused that she found it quite difficult to determine in her own mind whether she was hiring or being hired.)

The Lady.—"Have you a good store-closet connected with your kitchen?"

Mrs. W.—"We have."

The Lady.—"I suppose you do not have rich cake or pastry made. The highest families now are giving them up entirely. They make no rich pies or cake, but cook more meat and vegetables, and this hard gingerbread that you can chop with your teeth. Well, do you think we shall suit each other?"

During the delivery of this speech, my friend had time to collect her frightened senses, but unwilling to disturb the placid self-complacency of her visitor, she merely replied in answer to this query: "No, I think you are qualified to fill a higher position."

"Well," said the lady blandly, "I suppose I am," and they parted.

This being a verbatim report of an actual occurrence in our very city, it becomes a serious question, "Who are the mistresses?"

MAMMA (after endeavoring to administer a spoonful of castor-oil.)—"Naughty boy! O, nurse, he's blown it all into my face!"

BABY (sententiously.)—"Tink 'oo got worst of it dis time!"

Heaving the Lead.

Any one who has travelled on the Mississippi during low water has witnessed the process of heaving the lead, and will see where the "laugh comes in" in the following, without much difficulty:—

The Fanny was coming down the upper Mississippi, loaded with pig lead. As she was going over a shoal place the pilot gave the signal to heave the lead. The only man forward at the time was a green Irishman.

"Why don't you heave the lead?"

"Is it to heave the lead, your honor? Where to?"

"Overboard, you blockhead!"

The Irishman snatched up one of the pigs of lead and threw it overboard; the mate, in endeavoring to prevent him, lost his balance and fell into the river.

The captain, running to the edge of the deck, asked: "Why don't you heave the lead, and sing out how much water there is?"

"The lead is heaved, your honor, and the mate's gone down to see how much water there is," responded Pat.

How the Ballotville Female Convention Was Demoralized.

I.

It was as fine a spectacle as any one could see,
The meeting of the Ballotville Female Society;
For the sisters they wore spectacles, except a trifling few,
And some of them (the spectacles) were green and some were blue.

II.

But women are not properly respected everywhere,
And so it was a low design that was concocted there,
An infamous conspiracy for to demoralise
That splendid convocation and to break it up likewise.

III.

Miss Blinks arose and said it was enough to vex a saint,
The way some woman carry on, and how some creatures paint;
She also was ashamed to see 'em wearing sailor hats,
And thought the sisters should not come accompanied by cats.

IV.

Then Mrs. Brown remarked that she could not pretend to say
How old the previous speaker was, exactly to a day;
But she would like to know (and here she made a scornful face,)
How cats could be avoided while Miss Blinks was in the place.

V.

Then Sarah Smith got up and said that Mrs. William Brown,
Because she was a wife could not put other people down;
The man that she had married was a mean old stingy clown,
Who first had been refused by almost every girl in town.

VI.

Those bitter words brought on a dreadful storm, and pretty soon
Each sister, at that meeting, seemed as crazy as a loon;
The chairman she rapped hard and tried some order to restore,
But the row had got too lively, and at last she tried no more.

VII.

The way the fixings flew, then, was a caution to behold,
It were in vain to tell it, for the half could not be told,
But the secretary's documents were scattered all around,
And the chairman lost a chignon that has never since been found.

VIII.

Then suddenly, and while the conflict raged most furiously,
A delegation entered that was shocking for to see;
For the husbands of the sisters who were married were all there,
And each man had a baby that was hungry as a bear.

IX.

And they pinched those little infants with a view to make 'em yell,
And how the mothers went for 'em I won't pretend to tell;
But there was no more discussion about anything that day,
And the meeting was adjourned in quite an unexpected way.

X.

Since that disgraceful game was played on the society,
The members have pursued their avocations quietly;
Assembling in convention is a thing they do no more,
And upon that simple subject they now feel extremely sore.

The Watch.

"Watch" is from a Saxon word signifying "to wake." At first the watch was as large as a saucer; it had weights, and was called "the pocket clock." The earliest known use of the modern name occurs in a record of 1543, which mentions that Edward VI. had "ounce larum or watch of iron, the case being likewise of iron-gilt, with two plummettes of lead." The first great improvement, the substitution of the spring for weights, was about 1550. The earliest springs were not coiled, but only straight pieces of steel. Early watches had only one hand, and required winding twice a day. The dials were of silver or brass; the cases had no crystals, but opened at back and front, and were four or five inches in diameter. A plain watch cost the equivalent of $1,500 in our currency, and after one was ordered it took a year to make it.

There is a watch in a Swiss museum only three-sixteenths of an inch in diameter, inserted in the top of a pencil-case. Its little dial indicates not only hours, minutes, and seconds, but also days of the month. It is a relic of the old times, when watches were inserted in saddles, snuff-boxes, shirt-studs, breast-pins, bracelets, and finger-rings. Many were fantastic—oval, octangular, cruciform, or in the shape of pears, melons, tulips, or coffins.

Curious Request.

The Rev. Thomas S. Savage, one of the first missionaries to Africa, says: "The dogs of West Africa have so little hair that they are said to go naked, like their heathen masters. They have no bark, but instead make a low, suppressed, disagreeable noise, something like that of a deaf and dumb person trying to speak. On opening our new station at Fishtown, I took with me a fine Newfoundland dog, large and shaggy, having a roar rather than a bark, which made him a terror to all the people of the native town. This roar the natives called 'dog's English.'"

"One morning, early, a prominent headman came to the mission-house, pulling along by the neck a poor African cur, and standing off some distance, cried out: '*Deyo! Deyo!* (doctor! doctor!) I bring my dog to learn English.'"

"'What,' said the astonished missionary; 'do you think I came here to teach your dogs English?'"

"'No, no,' quickly replied the man, 'not you—you no fit to do dat;' then pointing to my dog, 'Him do dat. Him *sabby* (knows) English. Him talk him strong (bark aloud)—no tief come here steal now. 'S'pose I leave my dog here, him soon *sabby* English too; den no tief come steal my place too."

"To gratify the man in his simplicity, I told my dog Lee to open his school and do what he could for the benighted cur."

☞ A Hartford Professor, who felt a little rheumatic, lay down on a lounge and requested his friend W. to rub him after the movement cure style. W. gently beat him on the chest. "How hollow it sounds," said K., who was looking on. "That's nothing," said W., "wait till I get to his head!"

☞ "Are the pictures which you brought home from Europe all landscapes?" said an artist to Mrs. Shoddy one day.

"Lord bless you, no," replied the indignant lady; "they're ile paintins!"

☞ There is a great deal of theology in an idea of the little girl who wished she could be good without obeying her grandmother. She said it was easy enough to read good books and pray, but it was pretty hard to mind grandmother.

☞ A country doctor is so penurious that when he goes to make a visit in the country he takes a hen in his gig to eat up the oats his horse scatters while eating. The hen knows her business so well that she gets right out and goes to work without being told.

☞ Young ladies had better be fast asleep than "fast" awake.

AGRICULTURAL.

Diversified Labor.

The practical question of the day is not where shall we procure more labor? but rather, how can we utilize and profitably employ the varied capacities, tastes and inventive powers of every individual of our present population? What can each accomplish with the best results? What can be done for the employment of men practiced in no skillful employment? What for indigent women, and even children, dependent upon their own exertions for subsistence, for an education and advanced social positions? The state that furnishes employment for every son and daughter, labor suited to every capacity and taste, heavy toil for the unskilled and plodding, dexterous and delicate manipulation for the artistic, effort with zeal in it for the intellectual, will become instinct with life, energy, progress, wealth and contentment. Then labor will be cheerful, toil a pleasure, and its beneficent results enhanced beyond the highest expectation. Such results can never follow the practice of a few rude industries.

It is only a truism to say that the wealth of a country is the aggregate of its labor beyond its requirements for subsistence. Yet the truth of the saying is not sufficiently realized. The largest results in accumulation can, therefore, only be obtained by securing the best and most effective efforts of every individual. All must unite, then, and with heart and will, mind and muscle, contribute to the great end of enriching, beautifying and blessing this glorious land.—*Hon. H. Capron, at Georgia Fair.*

Composts.

I have been studying into matters somewhat, and have gained a pretty clear idea that if there were a well devised and carried out system of composts in every department where composts should be made, we would be spared many of the plagues, such as fevers and flies, that now beset us, and that with the same labor, a vast amount more might be raised for human and animal sustenance. The way some of our farmers on the hillside and down the valleys do let their barn-yards run to waste, is enough to make a "Farmer's Club" woman ferocious. The drainings from the stables stand in green and inky pools, festering by the road-sides, or when a rain-storm comes, go streaming across the highways into the fast running creeks, to be carried away, nobody knows where. As God takes care that nothing in all his universe is lost, doubtless it will reappear in some useful form in the future. But no thanks to the man who wastes it. Don't tell me he can't find time to build a cement wall across the lower side of his yard and to haul dry dirt and muck to hold the nourishing properties of his heaps till he is ready to apply them to his crops. Wouldn't two ears of corn and two blades of grass for one, and twice as many big cabbages, very soon make his time up to him? Such a farmer is just the one to let all the weeds grow and his ground lie hard baked in a drought to keep it from drying up.—*Fanny B. Johnson.*

To Train a Horse to Stand.

Take your horse on the bare floor and throw a strap over his back and fasten it to his right fore foot; lead him along and say "whoa," at the same time pull down the strap, which throws him on three feet, and makes him stop suddenly. This is the best way known to teach whoa, though you can put on the war bridle, and say, whoa, and give him a sharp jerk that will stop him about as soon as the strap to his foot. Then put him in harness, with the foot strap, as directed under the head of "training to harness," and drive him up to the door. The moment he undertakes to move, take his foot and say, whoa. Get in your carriage and get out again; rattle the thills, make all the noise getting in and out you can; give him to understand, by snatching his foot each time he moves, that he must stand until you tell him to go; and after a few times you can put the whole family in the carriage and he won't stir out of his tracks. —*American Stock Journal.*

Why Do Animals Need Salt?

Prof. James E. Johnson, of Scotland, says that half the saline matter of the blood (57 per cent.) consists of common salt, and as this is partly dissolved every day through the skin and kidneys, the necessity of continued supplies of it to the healthy body is sufficiently obvious. The bile also contains soda (one of the ingredients of salt) as a special and indispensable constituent, and so do all the cartilages of the body. Stint the supply of salt, and neither will the bile be able properly to assist digestion, nor the cartilages to be built up again as fast as they naturally waste. It is better to place salt where stock can have free access to it than to give it occasionally, in small quantities. They will help themselves to what they need, if allowed to do so at pleasure, otherwise when they become salt-hungry, they may take more than is wholesome.

Take Enough Sleep.

We are inclined to think, as a general rule, we work too many hours on the farm. The best man we ever had to dig ditches seldom worked, when digging by the rod, more than nine hours a day. And it is so in chopping wood by the cord, the men who accomplish the most, work the fewest hours. They bring all their brain and muscle into exercise, and make every blow tell. A farmer needs above all else, a clear head, and with all his faculties of mind and muscle light and active, and under complete control. Much, of course, depends on temperament; but as a rule, active men need sound sleep, and plenty of it. Let farmers, and especially farmers' boys, have plenty to eat, nothing to "drink," and all the sleep they can take.

What Say Our Farmers?

The following from a correspondent of the Country Gentleman, contains matter for thought and discussion:—"An English tenant farmer, paying a money rental half yearly, and liable to be noticed out by a six months' notice, buys corn brought 3000 miles to fatten animals, chiefly for the sake of the manure. An American yeoman, owning his land and possessing capital to invest in other speculations, and in some instances living in first-class style, sells his hay and feeds no animals for the purpose of enriching his own property, as the English tenant does that of his landlord."

☞ Violets, jasmines, verbenas, phlox, &c., are delighting the eyes of the Floridians. Havana complains of sultry weather.

THE RIDDLER.

Scriptural Enigma.

I am composed of 57 letters.
My 3, 11, 19, 18, 38, was a king of Israel.
My 9, 42, 47, 51, 44, is a country in Asia.
My 1, 2, 38, 47, 48, 4, was a disciple.
My 11, 29, 30, 39, 8, 16, 10, is a town in Syria.
My 15, 24, 1, 51, 44, 9, was a prophet.
My 7, 6, 38, 8, 56, was an ancient city.
My 47, 21, 45, 44, 40, 9, is one of Paul's Epistles.
My 54, 42, 14, 57, was an ancient city on the shores of the Mediterranean.
My 41, 44, 54, 31, 55, 50, 4, was a disciple.
My 45, 8, 9, 48, 7, was a prophet of Israel.
My 47, 25, 31, 35, is a book in the Old Testament.
My 9, 18, 22, 44, 36, is a celebrated mountain in Arabia.
My 24, 29, 38, 8, 43, was an ancient city in Phœnicia.
My 43, 11, 21, 56, 39, was a Hebrew woman.
My 32, 53, 52, 51, 54, 18, 49, 25, 24, is a book in the Old Testament.
My whole is a verse in St. Matthew.

RUDOLPH.

Riddle.

Through thy short and shadowy span
I am with thee, child of man;
With thee still from first to last,
In pain and pleasure, feast and fast,
At thy cradle and thy death,
Thine earliest wail and dying breath.
Seek thou not to shun or save,
On the earth or in the grave;
The worm and I, the worm and I,
In the grave together lie.

Riddle.

My initials begin with an A,
I've an A at the end of my name,
The whole of my name is an A,
And its backwards and forwards the same.

Problem.

A general going into battle had 2 officers to every 47 men. He lost in the action 10 officers and 217 men, and came out with 17 officers to every 401 men. How many officers went into the action and how many rank and file? JOSEPH S. PHEBUS.

Nebraska City, Nebraska

Conundrums.

☞ Why are bells the most obedient of inanimate things? Ans.—Because they make a noise when they are telled (told.)

☞ What words may be pronounced quicker and shorter by adding syllables to them? Ans.—Quick and short.

☞ When does the sun wrestle? Ans.—When it throws a shadow.

☞ What bar is that which often opens and never shuts? Ans.—A crowbar.

☞ Why is the most discontented man the most easily satisfied? Ans.—Because nothing satisfies him.

☞ Why are ripe potatoes in the ground like thieves? Ans.—Because they ought to be taken up.

☞ Why is it unjust to blame hackmen for cheating us? Ans.—Because we call them to take us in.

☞ Why does a sailor long for a cruise? Ans.—Because he always anchors after it.

☞ A SHAKSPEARIAN CON.—Why did Falstaff call Bardolph a lighthouse to his face? Ans.—Because he had a blazing beak-on.

Answers to Last.

ENIGMA—A stitch in time saves nine. DOUBLE REBUS—Napoleon Bonaparte, Expedition to Egypt. (Niobe, Aix, Pulp, Orange, Little Red Riding Hood, Ennui, Old Put, Nagasaki, Banquo, Odin, Newport, Argo, Penelope, Aalborg, Rob Roy, Turvey Top, Everet.)

ANAGRAMS—

"Woodman, forbear thy stroke!
Cut not its earth-bound ties;
Oh, spare that aged oak
Now towering to the skies!

Answer to Augustus's PROBLEM of Oct. 29th—170859375 parts of brandy to 97676081 parts of water contained in the mixture. Augustus, Veritas.

Answer to O. R. Sheldon's PROBLEM of Dec. 10th—10 39/64, 18, and 20.78/64 inches. J. S. Phebus, Veritas.

Answer to A. Martin's PROBLEM of Dec. 24th—3 is the number. Jos. S. Phebus.

RECEIPTS.

INDIAN PUDDING.—Place two quarts of fine white corn-meal in a tin-pan, season properly with salt, grate half a large nutmeg, add half a teaspoonful of soda and mix together well. Beat up the white and yolks of four eggs with considerable white sugar until the mass is very light, and add to it the meal with sufficient unskimmed milk to form a very stiff batter. Place in a bag and boil briskly till done. Serve hot with sauce.

APPLE DUMPLING.—Make a crust of 1 quart of flour, 2 tablespoonsful of cream of tartar, 1 teaspoonful of soda, 1 tablespoonful of butter or lard, a little salt, and milk enough to make a dough that can be rolled out. Cut this dough in eight pieces, roll them out thin, put slices of sour apple upon them, fold them up tight and steam or bake. Baking will require thirty minutes, steaming an hour. Either hard or liquid sauce may be used.

APPLE PIE.—Slice peeled apples upon a pie plate, and cover with a crust. Do not press it down at the edge, but trim it off neatly. Bake quickly and thoroughly. Remove the crust, turn its upper side down upon another pie plate. Mash the apple, sweeten it to the taste, flavor with nutmeg, add a piece of butter the size of a hickory nut, and spread the mixture upon the crust. A little sweetened cream poured upon this when eaten, is delicious.

VARIETY CAKES.—Take two eggs, half a cup of sour cream, half teaspoonful saleratus, a pinch of salt; mix with flour; roll out thinner than pie-crust, large as a saucer, and fry in hot lard as you do fried cakes.

LEMON JELLY.—One and three-quarter ounces of Russian isinglass, 3½ pounds of loaf-sugar, and 3 lemons. Cut the isinglass in small pieces; turn over it 1 quart of cold water, and let it stand for half an hour; then pour off the water; put the isinglass into a pitcher with the juice of 2 lemons and 1 cut in slices; put in the sugar and a dessert-spoonful of rose-water; over all pour 3 pints of boiling water; cover it, and let it stand an hour or so, until the isinglass is dissolved; strain through a jelly-bag into your forms, and set in a cold place.